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The Performance of the Basso Continuo in Seventeenth Century Italian Music

By

Tharald Borgir

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M.M. (Yale University) 1960

DISSERTATION

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Since English is not my native tongue I have sought and received generous help with the writing. Willard Potts read most of an advanced draft and made many helpful suggestions. Arthur Hills read one of the earlier drafts and commented extensively on the language. His equally extensive comments on matters of substance resulted in major improvements on a number of important points.

During my studies in Berkeley, and also at Yale, I have had the good fortune to benefit from the presence of Professor Richard L. Crocker. His keen understanding of historical processes in music, so well communicated through inspired teaching, time and again opened up new vistas for me, and I hope the effect of this exposure may be reflected on the following pages.

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THE PERFORMANCE OF THE BASSO CONTINUO IN
SEVENTEENTH-CENTURY ITALIAN MUSIC

By Tharald Borgir

Abstract

The performance of a basso continuo is thought to require two instruments: one for the realization, the other to reinforce the bass line. The assumption that a bass-line instrument always is needed in 17th-century basso continuo mostly results from questionable interpretations of theoretical sources. The dissertation explores when and why such instruments were used in Italian music of this period.

The use of a bass-line instruments vary greatly from one musical genre to another. Within some genres its presence was required in some pieces and not in others. Most sacred vocal music is accompanied by the organ continuo alone. An extra bass part, doubling the b. c. is sometimes included in large scale works after 1660. In the church sonata a bass-line instrument was used when the bass contained important contrapuntal material. In either case there would be a separate part for the bass-line instrument.

In opera a bass-line instrument is used continuously, also in the recitatives. Most often the b. c. would be performed by three instruments: harpsichord, cello, and archlute, the reason probably being that more instruments were needed in the larger halls where opera customarily

was performed. Surviving performance material indicates that each player had his own part.

In dance music from before 1680 the b. c. usually was performed either by a bass-line instrument alone, or by a chordal instrument alone. Since the three part texture is harmonically complete either alternative makes good sense.

A case can be made for doubling the b. c. in chamber sonatas and secular cantatas from after 1675 whether or not a separate part for this purpose existed. The chamber sonata was influenced by the church sonata and adopted contrapuntal procedures characteristic of the latter. Thereby the bass often came to contain important material, and in such cases it would seem appropriate to use a bass-line instrument even when a part is not furnished. Secular songs up to ca. 1675 are accompanied by a chordal instrument alone. Developments in opera at this time influences the performance of cantatas. In opera arias, the bass, which earlier had been devoid of melodic interest, now became melodically independent, much like an obbligato part. Opera composers apparently took advantage of the presence of a cello and used it in a soloistic capacity. When similar arias appear in cantatas, a cello, at times, was included there as well, although clearly not as a general practice.

The bass-line instruments most commonly used were the violone (Italian bass gamba, tuned GG - C - F - A - d - g), the archlute, and the cello. The North European bass gamba (= Italian tenor gamba, tuned

D - G - c - e - a - d') was rarely used except for special effects, and then mostly in opera.

When the participation of a bass-line instrument was desired in 17th-century Italian music there would normally be a separate instrumental part for this purpose. In the absence of a separate part, a bass-line instrument may be included in chamber sonatas and secular cantatas from ca. 1675 onwards if the bass is of sufficient contrapuntal importance. Modern notions, and editorial practices, which assume that the b. c. always should be doubled are in error. No general practice of bass-line doubling existed and each individual work therefore has to be considered separately on the basis of usage in that particular musical genre.

CHAPTER I
A CHALLENGE TO MODERN NOTIONS OF
BAROQUE PERFORMANCE PRACTICE

One of the basic tenets of basso continuo practice, as understood in the 20th century, is that two instruments are needed for its proper performance: a chordal instrument, such as the harpsichord, organ, or lute, for the realization, and a cello or viola da gamba to sustain and reinforce the bass line. This view is taken for granted in practically all writings on the subject. It is stated in the major dictionaries, in books on music history, and even in texts for music appreciation classes. Nevertheless, it is a view based on surprisingly little evidence. In fact, one may question whether this view ever existed at all in the Baroque period itself. Specifically, the issue to be raised is whether a bass-line instrument was ever an inevitable addition to the chordal instrument.

The rationale for using a sustaining bass-line instrument comes from two kinds of sources: statements in the contemporary theoretical literature, and the extra bass parts in certain types of music which seem to confirm these statements. As for the last point, extra bass parts are not found with any regularity when a large repertory is surveyed. They are thus somewhat suspect as evidence. It is, e. g., widely recognized that the presence, or absence, of an extra bass part in the so-called trio sonatas is unpredictable, and that the study of this repertory does not lead to clear conclusions one way or the other about

bass-line doubling. More important, not even the theorists stand so firmly behind the practice of bass-line doubling as later interpreters make it appear. F. T. Arnold, in his monumental study of thorough-bass treatises¹ cites only one statement which unquestionably recommends bass-line doubling, and that is from C. P. E. Bach's treatise on keyboard performance (1753).² This often quoted passage goes as follows:

The Most complete accompaniment to a Solo, to which nobody can take an exception, is a keyed instrument in conjunction with the Violoncello.³

The statement comes after a long paragraph in which Bach objects to having a soloist accompanied only by a cello, and clarifies what he himself considers adequate in such a situation. Nothing is said about ensemble music, whether vocal or instrumental. Considering the exactitude characteristic of C. P. E. Bach's writings in general, it is doubtful whether the above statement has implications beyond the specific

¹ F. T. Arnold: The Art of Accompaniment from a Thorough-Bass, as Practiced in the XVIIth and XVIIIth Centuries. London, Oxford University Press, 1931. Reprint by Dover, New York, 1965.

² C. P. E. Bach: Versuch über die wahre Art das Clavier zu spielen. Published for the author in Berlin, Part I in 1753, Part II in 1762.

³ C. P. E. Bach, op. cit., Part II, paragraph 9 of the introduction: "Das vollkommenste Accompagnement beim Solo, da wider niemand etwas einwenden kann, ist ein Clavierinstrument nebst dem Violoncell." In the English translation by Mitchell (New York, Norton, 1949, p. 173) the word "solo" is left out, an omission that considerably alters the meaning. The above translation is from Arnold, "The Art of Accompaniment, p. 237.

situation to which it is addressed, yet it has become a cornerstone in the argument for doubling of the bass line in all types of music. The whole question is in obvious need of review.

Any new look at continuo practice must, of course, broaden the basis of inquiry beyond what has been done before. Arnold has already covered a large part of the theoretical literature, and the re-examination of this material, with the hope of discovering possible oversights, is not a particularly promising avenue. Rather, it is the premise of this study that bass-line doubling, when practiced, can be explained on soundly pragmatic grounds. Generally speaking, explanations may be sought in two areas. The first concerns sonority: acoustical factors in the halls where certain types of music customarily were performed, or the size of the performing group, which sometimes may have prompted reinforcing the bass. Secondly, melodic or contrapuntal qualities of the bass line itself may have created the need to give it added prominence in some types of music. In other words, tangible features in the performance, function, or nature of the bass line must have caused the doubling to take place.

A persistent, and self-supporting argument for bass line-doubling maintains that the practice was so well established that it was assumed whether or not the theorists mention it or the musical scores call for it. The argument may be valid, but only if some tangible reasons show that the practice existed to start with. Such reasons may have developed

either during the 200 years of basso continuo predominance, or in the prior musical conditions leading to its emergence. For a proper perspective, therefore, one must turn to the origin of the basso continuo in the 16th century and follow its development from there. Italy is thus the natural starting point. Moreover, since Italian music played a leading role in Europe well into the 18th century, the developments there are of special significance. The most important performance traditions of the basso continuo developed within the first 100 years after its emergence and this study has consequently been focused on Italian practices of the 17th century.

Seventeenth Century Theorists on Bass-Line Doubling

Bass-line doubling in 17th-century music has not yet been the topic of a serious study. Very little source material has been brought to bear on the subject and when such material is introduced it is almost invariably without a critical evaluation of its significance. Most of the sources taken to support bass-line doubling are referred to in the following summary, quoted from an article by Peter Williams:⁴

. . . 'add a trombone where possible if the organetto is small' (Agazzari 1607) or a bassoon or dulcian (Praetorius 1619, p. 145) instead of the violone (Agazzari 1608) or 'chitarrone or a bassoon or any other instrument that can play quickly in the Messa Concertata of Cavalli's "Musiche Sacre" (Venice, 1656)'

⁴P. Williams: "Basso Continuo on the Organ". In Music and Letters, vol. 50 (1969), p. 148.

Praetorius will be dealt with below. The reference "Agazzari 1608" is unclear; he did not publish new material on basso continuo practice that year. The initial statement in the above quotation is paraphrased from Agazzari's well known treatise, Del sonare sopra il basso⁵. . . In the original it occurs in the discussion of wind instruments, and the complete sentence goes as follows:

And sometimes the trombone in small ensembles is used as contrabasso when the organetti are one octave above [notated pitch] .⁶

In the first place, the use of the trombone on the bass line applies only to wind music. Secondly, only when the organ is an octave higher does the trombone function in the manner of the contrabasso, playing the bass one octave lower than the keyboard instrument. The trombone then simply puts the bass down in its normal register where it would otherwise be lacking. This has nothing to do with bass-line doubling; it merely is a way of supplying the real bass when the chordal instrument is a four foot organ.

The quotation from Cavalli's Musiche Sacre is found in a printer's note which explains that the violoncello part may be played by an archlute, a bassoon, or other similar instrument, or that it may be left

⁵ Agostino Agazzari: Del sonare sopra il basso con tutti stromenti & uso loro nel concerto. Siena, Falcini, 1607.

⁶ "e tal volta il trombone in picciol conserto, s'adopera per contrabasso, quando sono organetti all'ottava alta." Italian text from the reprint of Agazzari's Del sonare in O. Kinkeldey, Orgel und Klavier in der Musik des 16. Jahrhunderts, Leipzig, Breitkopf und Härtel, 1910, p. 216.

out altogether.⁷ The important point is that the cello is part of a small instrumental trio which also includes two violins. The three instruments invariably play together as a group. In the vocal sections, which by far constitute the larger part of the work, the cello participates only if the violins also play. Since the string trio participates only intermittently, the basso continuo frequently is played by the organ alone. Far from being a proof of bass-line doubling this quotation argues against it. If it had been desired, a part which duplicated the organ line throughout could easily and inexpensively have been printed.

The material brought to light by F. T. Arnold, and subsequently quoted by practically every writer concerned with 17th-century music, still provides the most substantial case for bass-line doubling. Arnold cites only two theorists: Michael Praetorius and Michel de Saint-Lambert.⁸ As noted by Arnold, Saint-Lambert does not make a very positive statement and his remarks lend themselves to various interpretations. His treatise, published in Paris in 1707, is at any rate of questionable authority for 17th

⁷ Francesco Cavalli: Musiche Sacre, Venice, Vincenti, 1656. "Lo Stampatore alli Signori Virtuosi. Il Virtuosissimi Signor F. Cavalli, . . . ha imposto. . . , ch'io dica alle Signore loro, che la parte nominata Violoncino, che si ritrova in tutta l'opera (. . .) puo servire anco per un Chitarrone, Fagotto, Overo altro Istromento simile, pronto alla velocita, si puo anco tralasciare ad arbitrio."

⁸ Arnold, The Art of Accompaniment, p. 99, 196, and 237.

century Italian practices.⁹

In contrast to Saint-Lambert, Praetorius was thoroughly familiar with the Italian musical scene, and his observations deserve the most careful consideration. A substantial part of the third volume of Syntagma Musicum¹⁰ is devoted to the basso continuo. The comments on bass-line doubling constitute part of Praetorius' advice to the uninitiated organist.

It is also particularly to be observed, when 2 or 3 solo voices sing to the accompaniment of the General Bass which the Organist or Lutenist has before him and plays from, that it is very good, indeed almost necessary, to have the same General Bass played, in addition, by some bass instrument, such as a Bassoon, Dulcian, or Trombone, or, what is best of all, on a cello. I have therefore exhorted several singers, that a number of them should (as would be very praise-worthy) practice playing the cello in the chorus, which is a very easy matter, and is an admirable adornment to the foundation, and helps to strengthen it, since one cannot, in every school, always have good Bass singers.¹¹

Or one can also have the basso continuo line sung, and for that reason the text has been added underneath, as well as this can be done, in those pieces where it is not already included in the instrumental bass parts.

⁹ The work in question is M. de Saint-Lambert, Nouveau traite de l'accompagnement, Paris, Ballard, 1707. Arnold, in the body of the text (p. 172) gives 1680 as the date of publication, which frequently is quoted by others. The correct year is given in an appendix (p. 900), and the mistake is attributed to Fétis.

¹⁰ Michael Praetorius: Syntagma Musicum, III, Wolfenbuettel, Holwein, 1619. Reprinted as vol. 15 of Documenta musicologica, Erste Reihe, Kassel, Baerenreiter.

¹¹ Michael Praetorius: Syntagma Musicum, p. 145. The translation of the first paragraph is from Arnold, The Art of Accompaniment, p. 99 with two emendations: at the beginning the word "solo" (allein) has been added; the word Bassgeigen, by Arnold rendered as violone, is

In expressing his concern for strengthening the bass, Praetorius talks about two different situations. One of these consists in having some of the singers in the chorus play the bass part on a cello. This serves a dual purpose. It is mainly done by way of practicing. At the same time, it helps improve the sound of the group, since bass singers are in short supply.

The second and more important situation is described at the beginning of the passage, and refers to music in two or three parts. It is important to realize the limitations of this advice. It applies only to vocal music with one singer to a part. Praetorius is exclusively concerned with duets and trios, and not with solos, quartets, or choral works in four or more parts. He gives the option of having the General Bass sung rather than played, and this suggests that the "2 or 3 voices" exclude the bass. Thus with only two or three voices singing

translated as "cello". "Ist diss auch sonderlich zu mercken, Wenn 2. oder 3 Stimmen allein in den General Bass, denn der Organist, oder Lauttenist für sich hat, und draus schlägt, gesungen werden; Dass es sehr gut, auch fast notig sey, denselben General Bass mit einem Bass Instrument, als Fagott, Dolcian oder Posaun oder aber, welchs zum allerbesten, mit einer Bassgeigen, darzu machen lest. Darum ich dann etliche Cantores darzu ermahnet, und wer sehr zu loben, wenn es ihrer viel also for die hand nehmen, dass sie sich off einer Bassgeigen, den Bass im Chor mitzustreichen, (welches dann gar eine leichte kunst ist) execiren mochten, welches, weil man in allen Schulen nicht allezeit gute Bassisten haben kann, das Fundament trefflich zieret und stercken hilfft.

Oder man kan auch den General Bass darzu singen lassen, darum ich dann Text so gut er sich darzu schicken wollen, darunter applicirt, in denen Cantonibus, wo der Text nicht allbereit in den Instrumental Bassen zu finden seyn wird.

something is wrong with the balance. Four voices normally include a vocal bass, and solos have a sufficiently light texture for the basso continuo to hold its own. With two or three high voices, however, Praetorius apparently felt that the ensemble was "top-heavy" and needed strengthening in the bass.

The limited application of Praetorius' remarks is particularly apparent when considered in context of the third part of the Syntagma Musicum. One section of this work is devoted to a description of about 20 different ways to combine voices and instruments for performing sacred vocal music.¹² One of the ways is the case in point. None of the others exhibit examples of bass-line doubling.

In another publication from 1619, Polyhymnia, Caduceatrice & Panegyrica,¹³ Praetorius demonstrates the application of the different combinations described in the Syntagma. Apart from the larger ensembles which optionally may be performed with fewer voices there are only three pieces in two or three parts. In two of these pieces the upper parts are marked Voce et Instrumento, so that the doubling of the bass is offset by the simultaneous doubling of the upper parts. It is abundantly evident, both from the discussion in Syntagma and from the music in Polyhymnia

¹² M. Praetorius, Syntagma Musicum III, pp. 169-198.

¹³ Michael Praetorius: Polyhymnia Caduceatrix & Panegyrica. 1619. In his Complete Works, (Wolfenbuettel, Kallmeyer, 1930) vol. 17.

that Praetorius is an exponent of the Renaissance practice of freely mixing voices and instruments. His recommendation for bass-line doubling hardly represents an established practice of the past, nor can it by itself be taken as guideline for the future.

Procedure and Sources

The adoption of the basso continuo in practically all Italian music shortly after 1600 would seem to indicate a unified practice in which the bass line had essentially the same function in all categories of music. Actually, the basso continuo was applied to a variety of existing forms and types of textures, and in the process new categories were created, each with its own distinct type of bass function. These new categories must be examined separately, with attention both to their 16th century predecessors and to the effect of the basso continuo on them. The following order has been chosen for a systematic exploration of the subject;

- 1) Sacred Vocal Music before 1650
- 2) Instrumental Music for the Church
- 3) Secular Instrumental Music
- 4) Large Scale Dramatic Works
- 5) Secular Vocal Music
- 6) Sacred Vocal Music after 1650

As stated above, one of the most important reasons for reinforcing the basso continuo very likely is the need to bring out its melodic or contrapuntal qualities. In order to pursue this line of reasoning, the most important source material obviously is the music itself. Many

primary sources have been consulted since only a small fraction of the works examined is available in modern editions. Although this creates problems of accessibility, the original material has the considerable advantage of revealing things that often get lost in modern editions.

Special emphasis, of course, is given to the question of how many different instruments played the bass. In the case of publications, great reliance has been put on the number of printed parts on the assumption that there would be one for each player. It is true that the player of a bass-line instrument may have read from the part on the keyboard stand,¹⁴ but this is a consideration to be taken account of only when the practice of doubling can be documented otherwise. In those cases where the organ served as the keyboard instrument, the customary position of the music rack made it very difficult, if not impossible, for the cello or gamba player to read the continuo part.

In addition to the chapters dealing with specific types of music, a chapter dealing with bowed bass instruments and one dealing with the archlute have been included. The first of these is a much more complicated matter than usually recognized. Specific terms for instruments often changed meaning with the passage of time, and sometimes the same terms were used differently from country to country. Finally, the

¹⁴ See f. ex., the frontispiece in J. J. Quantz, Versuch einer Anweisung die Flöte traversiere zu spielen, Berlin, Vos. 1752. Reprinted as vol. II of Documenta musicologica, Erste Reihe, Kassel, Baerenreiter.

archlute chapter gives this very prominent instrument some long overdue attention. Since the archlute is mentioned repeatedly in the sources on which this thesis is based, a study of the manner in which it performed was considered particularly relevant.

CHAPTER II
THE ORIGIN OF THE BASSO CONTINUO

The emergence of the basso continuo is one of the most dramatic events in the history of music. Virtually overnight it caused a major stylistic revolution and has therefore quite naturally attracted the attention of many modern scholars. The background and early manifestations of basso continuo are admirably dealt with by Otto Kinkeldey in his study of 16th century keyboard instruments and their music.¹ Max Schneider's book, Die Anfänge des Basso Continuo,² while rounded out with interesting additional details, does not in fact much alter the picture drawn by Kinkeldey. By far the most complete treatment of early 17th century practices is found in F. T. Arnold's The Art of Accompaniment. The following survey draws freely from each of these three sources.

The earliest known basso continuo part appears in the MS of a 40 part polychoral motet by Alessandro Striggio, Ecce beatem luce,³ dated 1587. Not long thereafter such parts begin to appear in print, and

¹ Otto Kinkeldey: Orgel und Klavier in der Musik des 16. Jahrhunderts, Leipzig, Breitkopf und Härtel, 1910.

² Max Schneider, Die Anfänge des Basso Continuo, Leipzig, Breitkopf und Härtel, 1918.

³ A facsimile of the part is included in Schneider, Die Anfänge, plate opposite of p. 67.

these also at first come from polychoral works.⁴

Thus begins a steady trickle of works with basso continuo parts, which grows after 1600 to such flood proportions that these parts are soon taken for granted in all works. The early examples vary considerably: some give the bass line of the choruses on separate staves; some both the bass and the soprano; and some give even full scores.⁵ The intention is in all cases the same, namely to provide the organist with something from which he can furnish a suitable accompaniment. Soon after 1600 these parts become standardized for all types of music so that basso continuo, as the modern term indicates, means simply a continuous bass part.

The practice of using an organ accompaniment in ensemble music most certainly goes considerably further back than the presence of printed parts. Neither Croce nor Blanchieri found it necessary to explain how their added parts were to be used. In other words they assumed that most organists already knew how to realize a bass. The extra part most likely relieved the performer from having to make one up himself, and indeed the inclusion of a basso continuo is at times alluded to on title pages as being for the convenience of the organist.⁶

⁴The two earliest known prints are: Giovanni Croce: Spartitura delli Motetti a otto voci, Venice, (Vincenti?), 1594, and Adriano Banchieri: Concerti ecclesiastici a otto voci, Venice, Vincenti, 1595.

⁵Kinkeldey, Orgel und Klavier, p. 196 ff.

⁶For example, Gabriele Fattorini: Sacri Concerti a due voci . . . col basso generale per maggior commodita de gl'organista. Venice, Amadino, 1600.

Scattered references of various kinds attest to the use of chordal instruments around the middle of the 16th century in contexts which suggest basso continuo practice. Reese cites an account of a performance in 1568 of a motet, Ecce beatem luce, by Striggio which included the use of a chordal instrument.⁷ The ensemble consisted of eight trombones, eight viola da arco, eight flauti grossi, one strumento da penna and a liuto grosso. Reese is presumably correct in assuming that the strumento da penna is a harpsichord. Most of the instruments come in choirs of eight and have a sustained sound. The harpsichord and the lute are the only plucked instruments. Their function is not immediately clear: there are too few of them to form a separate choir, yet they cannot logically be divided between the three other choirs. It would seem well within the realm of possibilities that the plucked instruments furnished a chordal accompaniment, perhaps from a written out continuous bass part.

Using a bass line to make up an accompaniment is mentioned as early as 1553 by the Spaniard Diego Ortiz.⁸ His example specifies a

⁷ The occasion was the wedding of Duke William of Bavaria to Renée of Lorraine. The account is found in the Dialoghi (1569) of Massimo Troiano, and is quoted by G. Reese in Music of the Renaissance, New York, Norton, 1959, p. 487. The title, Ecce beatem luce, is the same as that of the 40 part motet from 1587 by the same composer, mentioned above. Reese assumes the two works are identical but that cannot be the case: the 1568 version has a total of 26 parts divided so as to suggest three choirs; the 1587 version has 41 parts divided into four choirs.

⁸ Diego Ortiz, Tratado de glosas sopra clausulas y otros generos en la musica de violones, Rome, 1553, quoted by Arnold in The Art of Accompaniment, p. 5.

harpsichord accompaniment for a solo viol, but nothing either implies or prohibits giving it a wider application. That the source is Spanish does not stand in the way of applying it to Italian practices; an Italian version of the treatise, published in Rome appeared the same year.⁹

Besides these examples in instrumental music, there are also indications that choral groups on occasion were accompanied by a keyboard instrument.¹⁰ A previously unnoticed passage in Pietro Aron's Lucidario in Musica may indicate that such accompaniment was not so occasional, but possibly done as a matter of course. The passage does not deal with accompaniment as such, but comes in a discussion of the use of accidentals on the organ.

It still is left to remind those who are in charge of the music, that is, to those who are called Maestri di Capella, that when it sometimes happens that the chorus is going to sing a work in the sixth or the eighth mode, in which they find the range too high, they should not for their own accommodation, inconvenience the organist by telling him that for their ease he should change the note F of the sixth mode so it appears one half step lower, and so the mode starts with E, but (make the change) with the sign b-flat.¹¹

⁹Diego Ortiz. Glose sopra le Cadenze, & altre sorte de punti in la Musica del Violone. Roma, Dorica, 1553

¹⁰Kinkeldey, Orgel und Klavier, p. 20 and 98ff., 190ff.

¹¹Pietro Aron: Lucidario in Musica di alcune opponioni antiche, e moderne con le loro Oppositioni, e Resolutioni . . . Venice, Scotto, 1545, p. 37:

"Ci resta ancora di dar ricordo a queglii, i quali hanno cura, & carico della Musica, cioè a coloro, che sono detti Maestri di Capella, che quando alcuna volta avviene, che ne loro Cori ritrovano qualche contento composta regolarmente sopra al sesto, overo sopra l'ottavo tuono, il quale loro parra, che loro sia discomodo il suo ascendere,

Aron does not say in so many words that the organ accompanies the chorus, but the elaborate explanation would seem totally superfluous if the organist is to give only the initial pitch. If this interpretation is correct, the accompaniment of ensembles by a chordal instrument must have been common practice before the middle of the 16th century.

The use of a chordal instrument for an accompaniment is also suggested in a group of publications appearing from 1540 and on. One collection entitled Musica Nova, Accomodata per cantar et sonar sopra organi; et altri strumenti¹² consists of instrumental ensemble pieces for four players, published in parts, as was all music at that time. The reference to the organ is generally taken to mean the work may be scored for solo performance on the organ.¹³ In this interpretation the explanatory part of the title is translated as "to be sung, and to be played on the organ; or by other instruments". Much hinges on the meaning of the word sopra which here is rendered as "on" (the organ). There is reason to believe, however, that sopra might also be translated as "above".

essi non deono (sic) per accomodare se, discomodare il loro Sonatore del l' Organo con fargli a sapere, che per loro commodita voglia rimuovere dal sesto tuono la corda di, F & collocarla un tuon piu basso, il qual tuono nascera in E, ma col segno del, b, molle."

¹² Venice, (Arrivabene?) 1540. Modern reprint edited by Colin Slim, as vol. I of Monuments of Renaissance Music, Chicago, The University Chicago Press, 1964.

¹³ Op. cit., p. xxxvii.

The case rests on usage in the early 17th century as exemplified in the following title from Banchieri:

Ecclesiastiche sinfonie dette canzoni in aria francese a quattro voci, per sonare, e cantare, & sopra un basso seguente concertare entro Organo. (Venice, 1607)

Sacred symphonies called canzoni in the French style in four parts, to be played, and sung, and concerted above the basso seguente on the organ.

The corresponding translation of the Musica Nova passage would be "to be sung and played above the organ; or above other instruments." The implication in either case is that the main parts stand out above the accompaniment played on the organ. This translation would leave no doubt about the function of the organ.

How the organist arrived at the accompaniment is an important question, but one that properly belongs to Renaissance performance practice. One possibility, however, should be mentioned. It has been observed that Ortiz (1551) knew of a practice in which the harpsicordist improvised an accompaniment from a single bass line (see below). It is therefore well within the realm of possibilities that the organist, confronted with the Musica Nova, might have followed the same procedure. If so, basso continuo accompaniments might have been commonly used before the middle of the 16th century.

Colin Slim points out that title pages with reference to the organ similar to that in Musica Nova are common in instrumental as well as vocal music from the mid-16th century.¹⁴ Reese observes that some

¹⁴ Monuments of Renaissance Music Vol. 1, p. xxxvii.

of the instrumental works were published simultaneously in organ tablature¹⁵ from which he concludes that ensemble performance must have been the primary purpose of the part-book edition. His argument further strengthens the case for using the organ as an accompaniment only.

During the first three or four decades of the 17th century a multitude of terms are used to designate the basso continuo. In the early prints by Croce and Banchieri the added part is called spartitura (later modified to partitura). The verb spartire means "to divide". Its substantive form refers to the vertical lines, the predecessors of bar-lines, used in the parts. Other common terms were basso generale, basso principale and basso seguente. Sometimes the participation of the organ is indicated through direct reference, such as con la parte per l'organo--"with a part for the organ", con il suo basso per sonare nell'organo--"with a bass to be played on the organ", per cantar nel organo--"to be sung with the organ", etc. The term "basso continuo", first used by Viadana in his "Cento Concerti",¹⁶ replaced most of the other terms and expressions towards the middle of the century.

The term basso seguente is today commonly used for a bass line obtained by extracting all the lowest sounding pitches in a work. It is mostly required in pieces of four or more parts. In order to have a

¹⁵ Reese, Music in the Renaissance, p. 529 and 537.

¹⁶ Lodovico Viadana: Cento Concerti Ecclesiastici, a Una, a Due, a Tre, & a Quattro voci. Con il Basso continuo per sonar nel Organo. Venice, Vincenti, 1602.

"continuous bass", where the real bass rests, the lowest sounding pitches of the remaining parts are extracted.

Only Banchieri appears to have used the term basso seguente in the 17th century and he did not attach our modern restrictive connotation to it. In his Gemelli Armonici¹⁷ the organ part is labeled basso continuo but the preface repeatedly refers to this part as the basso seguente. Since the organ part is melodically independent of the two upper voices it is clear that Banchieri uses the term basso seguente with the same meaning as others use basso continuo.

For the purpose of clarity a specific term is often needed to distinguish between a bass derived from several existing parts and a true basso continuo -- i. e., an independent bass. Since, however, basso seguente was not distinguished from basso continuo in the 17th century, modern attempts to create a distinction are a source of confusion. For this reason, the expression "derived basso continuo" has been adopted on the following pages to refer to a bass line extracted from the lowest sounding pitches.

¹⁷ Adriano Banchieri: Gemelli Armonici che avidendevolmente concertano duoi voci in variati modi. Op. 21. Venice, Amadino, 1609. The organ part is marked Basso continuo per l'Organo.

CHAPTER III SACRED VOCAL MUSIC I

An examination of basso continuo practice in 17th-century Italy may profitably begin with sacred vocal music. Not only are the earliest examples of basso continuo found in vocal music for the church, but developments in this repertory also had a significant influence on instrumental music.

Sacred vocal music comprises a number of different genres. Best known today is the monody. Perhaps more widespread, at least after the middle of the century, were the concerted works featuring vocal solos, chorus, and instruments, an attractive repertory almost completely neglected by historians of music. Finally, choral polyphony in the Renaissance tradition was written in quantity throughout the century. Since these three genres all developed independently it is necessary to deal with each one separately.

During the last three decades or so of the 17th century sacred vocal music was considerably affected by developments in opera and oratorio. In order to take these developments into account it has been necessary to add a second chapter on vocal music for the church. Only the discussion of monody has been divided between the chapters. The two other topics are dealt with in only one place: vocal polyphony on the pages immediately following and the concerted works in Chapter IX.

Choral Polyphony

Sixteenth century polyphony is harmonically complete and one may ask why an organ accompaniment came to be included. The accompaniment does not enhance the sound of a good chorus, and nobody argues for its addition on æsthetic grounds. The rationale appears to have been the same as that which prompts choral conductors today to include a piano accompaniment: to keep the chorus on pitch. This is the implication of a comment by M. Cazzati on the performance of some of his psalms:

One may use one or two organs, keeping the beat somewhat fast; if one desires to sing without organs it is necessary that there be a violone, trombone, or some other similar instrument to maintain the pitch, in this case keeping the beat a little broader.¹

Organ is first choice as continuo instrument; one may even use two, if available, one for each of the two choirs. Without an organ, however, it is still necessary to have the basso continuo played by a single-line instrument. Since the function of the latter was to keep the choir on pitch the organ must also have been used for this purpose, although not necessarily exclusively so. Cazzati's remarks about the need for a

¹ Maurizio Cazzati: Salmi a 8. Bologna, Pisarri, 1660. The passage occurs in the preface: "Si puo cantare con uno o due Organi battendo la battuta alquanto presto; volendosi poi cantare senza Organi, è necessario vi sia un qualche Istromento come Violone, Trombone o altro simile per potersi mantenere in voce, battendo la battuta un poco piu larga."

slower tempo when only a single-line instrument is used suggests why the organ was preferred. With an organ realization of the basso continuo all the notes in each chord are present and provide continuous pitch reference for the singers. With only a single-line instrument the singers have to work with the interval between their respective parts and the bass and may need more time to let the pitch "sink in".

A concern similar to Cazzati's is voiced by G. M. Trabaci in the preface to the Passionem D. N. Jesu Christi.² Ideally this work should be performed by voices alone, but Trabaci recognizes the difficulty in finding singers equal to the task. In describing the complex interaction of the various groups of singers he suggests a compromise:

The Turba gives the pitch to the Testo, and the Testo to all the other parts. The answers of the Turba have been put into another part-book. In the Turba the voices (of the full chorus) are to be doubled and to be accompanied by some bass instrument such as the cello, trombone or bassoon in order that the three [singers] of the Testo always keep on pitch.³

Trabaci ends by saying that the instrument is used to keep the Testo

² Giovanni Maria Trabaci: Passionem D. N. Jesu Christi, Naples, Beltrani, 1634.

³ Op. cit., preface. "A parte del presente libro ho messo in un altro volume, le risposte della Turba, quale lascia il suo Tono al Testo, & il Testo a Tutti l'altri parti, ove le voci (nel cor pieno) han da esser doppie, & accompagnate da qualche Instrumento di Basso, come viola da braccio, Trombone, o Fagotto a finche i tre del Testo si mantengano sempre in tuono."

Viola da braccio has been translated as "cello" on the grounds that Trabaci is asking for a bass instrument from the viola da braccio family. As demonstrated in the chapter Bowed Bass Instruments, the expression viola da braccio, without a modifier, is at times used of the cello in 17th and early 18th century Italian sources.

(Narrator) on pitch, but that is only indirectly true. The Testo sings alone without instrumental accompaniment and can apparently be relied on to keep up the pitch. The critical link in the chain is the chorus (Turba, representing the people), which gives the pitch to the Testo. The chorus apparently cannot be relied on to maintain the pitch and, consequently, is accompanied by an instrument.

Praetorius, in the preface to Polyphymnia Caduceatris & Panegyrica⁴ also mentions that a cello or a trombone may substitute for the organ continuo. Although he does not explain this usage it would seem that his purpose was similar to that of Trabaci and Cazzati.

Whatever may be the significance of Praetorius' remarks, at least two prominent 17th-century composers, Cazzati and Trabaci, linked the use of instruments in conjunction with a chorus to the problem of keeping up the pitch. Although both made specific reference to single-line instruments it is clear that the organ would be better suited for the task. Since no other rationale for including the basso continuo with choral polyphony is mentioned at the time, one must conclude that an important reason, and possibly the only one, was to keep the choir on pitch. This, in turn, has implications relative to the question of bass line doubling. The primary purpose of the keyboard accompaniment in choral polyphony was to aid the singers and there are no indications that

⁴In the Complete Works, vol. 17, paragraph 4 of the preface.

the bass line itself was regarded as important enough to be strengthened or brought out.

The subordinate role of the basso continuo is reflected in the nature of the part. John Bryden observes that in the motets by Orazio Benevoli (1605-1672) the function of the basso continuo "is one of chordal reinforcement without participation in the imitative design".⁵ Bryden's observations may be extended to early 17th-century choral polyphony in general. When the basso continuo at times seems more active it is only because it is derived from the vocal bass line and this part often has an important contrapuntal function. Generally speaking, the basso continuo should not be thought of as a melodic line but as a succession of discrete symbols, each one indicating the correct chord to be played.

One last factor must be considered relative to bass-line doubling in sacred polyphony: the original publications as well as contemporary manuscripts contain only one basso continuo part.⁶ It is noteworthy

⁵ John R. Bryden: "The Motets of Orazio Benevoli". Thesis, University of Michigan, 1951, p. 102.

⁶ This statement is largely based on an examination of the catalogues of a number of Italian libraries as well as those of other major depositories of old music such as British Museum (London), Bodleian Library (Oxford), Bibliotheque Royale de Belgique (Brussels), Bibliotheque Nationale (Paris), etc. By far the most useful collection has been that at the Civico Museo Bibliografia Musicale in Bologna, partially because of the uncommonly large mass of material but also because the printed catalogue (G. Gaspari: Catalogo della biblioteca del Liceo musicale di Bologna, vol. 2, Bologna, Libreria Romagnoli dall'Acqua. 1890) gives sufficient information for a survey of the kind needed for the present purpose. Recent catalogues of the collections in Lucca and Asissi have also been helpful (Bibliotheca musicae. Collana di cataloghi e bibliografie diretta da Claudio Sartori).

that the manuscripts do not differ from printed works: it is conceivable that a printer might have balked at the added expense of issuing an extra part, but a maestro di capella with his mind set on strengthening the bass would surely have found a way to make two copies of the basso continuo.

It remains to deal briefly with a group of 17th-century sacred choral works which erroneously may give the impression that the basso continuo was doubled. Such works are invariably polychoral and most often for two choirs of four voices each. An example is Galeria del sacro parnasso by the Bolognese composer Lorenzo Penna.⁷ The work has ten printed parts, eight for singers, one for the organ, and one designated as "violone o tiorba".⁸ Several factors must be considered relative to this case. It is not uncommon, particularly among Bolognese composers,

Milano, Istituto Editoriale Italiano, 1962-. Vol. I: Assisi, Biblioteca Comunale; Vol. III: Lucca, Biblioteca del Seminario.) The older catalogues of the libraries in Naples, Modena, Florence, etc. do not always contain enough information; however, they contain nothing that seem to contradict the above conclusion.

⁷ Lorenzo Penna, bolognese: Galeria del sacro parnasso ornata con adornamenti di messe piene, e brevi a 4 & 8 voci. . . & instrumenti ad libitum. Bologna, Monti, 1678.

⁸ The option of using either violone or theorbo on a bass part is commonly found in Italian music, particularly after 1650. It may seem strange that the theorbo, which generally is thought of as a chordal instrument, should substitute for the violone. The question is pursued in detail in the chapter on the archlute; suffice it to say here that the theorbo and the archlute apparently were used for making realizations as well as for playing the bass line alone.

(Colonna, Cazzati, G. Bononcini and others), to include two organ parts in polychoral works, one for each of the choirs. Secondly, it is known that a bass-line instrument at times was used to substitute for the organ. Cazzati's polychoral psalms, discussed above, allow for either of the two alternatives: they may be performed with two organs as well as with only one bass-line instrument. Considering the freedom Cazzati leaves to the performer in this matter it seems likely that he also would have accepted the idea of using organ with one of the choirs and violone or theorbo with the other. Be that as it may, such a possibility is at any rate suggested in a collection of polychoral psalms by G. B. Bassani.⁹ The title mentions only two organs but one of the parts is marked Organo secondo, violone, o tiorba. In other words, the work may be performed with two organs, or with organ for the first choir and violone or theorbo for the second choir. Returning now to Penna's Galeria it seems evident that the second bass part was intended for use with the second choir and not to reinforce the basso continuo line as such.

The instrumental parts for the second choir in the three above mentioned works are all optional. Penna does not spell this out as clearly as the two others, but the expression strumenti ad libitum, used in the title, certainly implies such an alternative. The printers, apparently,

⁹G. B. Bassani: Salmi per tutto l'anno. A otto voci reali divisi in due chori con il secondo Organo a beneplacito. Bologna, Silvani, 1704. The second organ part is marked "Organo secondo, violone, o tiorba".

were not deterred by the cost of including an additional part, even one which many choir directors may have chosen not to use. In other words, it seems that one of the important concerns of the printer was to make the performance material as complete as possible. This observation is of considerable importance for the whole question of bass-line doubling and has implications beyond the specific repertory under discussion here. If bass-line doubling was a common practice there would surely have been printers who were willing to provide an extra bass part in addition to the basso continuo. The absence of such parts is therefore a strong indication that only a keyboard instrument was used.

To sum up, the idea of doubling the basso continuo in early 17th century Italian choral polyphony finds no support in contemporary sources. The basso continuo was performed by one chordal instrument alone or by some suitable substitute such as a bass line instrument, but not by both of these at the same time.

The practice of using only one instrument for the basso continuo remains unaltered throughout the 17th century and well into the 18th. The period after 1720 has not been systematically explored but after this date one finds scattered examples of added bass parts. Around 1760 such parts are found in abundance. In the Assisi library one thus finds a substantial number of choral works by G. B. Martini (1706-1784), Guiseppe Paolucci (1726-1776), Stanislao Mattei (1750-1825), and others, in which there is a part for cello and sometimes also one for double bass in addition to the

basso continuo. The material examined is too limited for any definite conclusions, but it appears that bass-line doubling in sacred choral music achieved currency, not during the Baroque, but towards the beginning of the Classical period.

The Sacred Concerto

One of the novelties of the Baroque period is the emergence, during the first years of the 17th century, of publications featuring vocal solos. This new repertory is often loosely referred to by the term "monody", but it is well to bear in mind that many of the publications that contained solos also included ensemble pieces for two, three, or more voices. When intended for church performance, such works are today known as "sacred concertos", a term found in some of the early publications but not used as generic term in Italy at the time.

Lodovico da Viadana's "One Hundred Sacred Concertos" is the earliest known example of liturgical music in the new style. In the preface Viadana claims to be the inventor of such concertos and describes how the idea initially occurred to him: "I saw singers wishing to sing to the Organ, either with three voices or two, or a single one by itself, were sometimes forced by the lack of compositions suitable to their purpose to take one, two, or three parts from Motets in five, six, seven or even eight."¹⁰

¹⁰ Viadana's preface together with an English translation is found in F. T. Arnold, The Art of Accompaniment; the above quotation as well as those immediately following are taken from p. 3-4.

The result, of course, left something to be desired: the selections were "full of long and repeated pauses", and there was a "lack of melody, and, in short, very little continuity or meaning." After having given "no little thought to these difficulties", Viadana embarked on the ambitious project of writing solos for all kinds of voices (soprano, alto, tenor, and bass), duets for every conceivable combination of voice ranges, and assorted pieces in three and four parts.

As in choral polyphony, the basso continuo is treated by Viadana as an adjunct to and not as an essential part of the melodic and contrapuntal framework. This is clearly seen in the title and in the table of contents: the pieces are listed according to the number of voices, excluding the basso continuo. A concerto a uno is thus performed by one singer and organ, a concerto a due by two singers and organ, etc. More important, the subordinate role of the organ is reflected in the nature of the bass line. In a solo concerto all the important material is concentrated in the vocal line and the basso continuo features only slow motion. A similar situation is found in pieces in two or three parts: melodically significant material is presented by the voices only. The sole exception comes where one of the vocal parts is the bass. The continuo is under these circumstances often reduced to only the harmonically active notes, but if not, the part may contain much of the same melodic material as does the vocal bass. The melodic quality of the basso continuo in such cases is, of course, incidental, and not characteristic of Viadana's concertos in general.

A modern observer, when confronted by two similar parts such as the vocal bass and the basso continuo described above, is apt to see quite different implications from those seen by a 17th-century musician. In the present day view the basso continuo is regarded as the main part and is doubled by the vocal bass. For Viadana and his contemporaries the vocal parts are most important so that in their view the vocal bass is doubled by the basso continuo. This is more than mere semantics: it amounts to a fundamental difference in view with regard to the nature of the basso continuo. The modern view gives support to the current theory of bass-line doubling. If one is to arrive at a true understanding of the question of doubling it is essential to be aware of the 17th-century view of the basso continuo.

It goes without saying that doubling of the basso continuo is inappropriate in Viadana's concertos. The basso continuo is there only to provide a sonorous background for the vocal part or parts, and to attempt to bring out the bass line with another instrument is against a basic premise of the style.

Viadana's concertos established a new musical form that was perpetuated by subsequent composers. Their works continue to feature solos as well as various kinds of ensembles. The melodic material is concentrated in the vocal part or parts, and the basso continuo is completely subordinate. As one might expect there are printed parts only for the voices and the organ and no extra bass part or other indications that such

a part might be desirable.

Significant changes in the sacred concerto affecting the basso continuo take place towards the end of the 17th century. At that time the bass line, which in earlier concertos is very static, increasingly features melodic activity. Moreover, publications occasionally contain an extra bass part doubling the basso continuo. The significance of these new factors is best understood in light of developments in other musical genres, and a discussion has therefore been postponed to chapter VIII.

CHAPTER IV THE CHURCH SONATA

Instrumental ensemble music does not figure prominently in 16th century musical life, and only in the 17th century did this genre develop styles and forms of its own. The lines of development are as yet only imperfectly understood, but at some point a distinction was made between music intended for performance in church and that intended for the chamber. By the late 1600's these form two clearly recognizable categories. In the early part of the century, however, the situation is more complex. Pieces from both categories are often included in the same collection without distinction. Whereas some of these pieces are dances, which at this time are associated only with the secular scene, most of the others are not so easily labeled. Were all of them appropriate to both church and chamber; were they intended either for church or chamber only; or were some intended for church and others for the chamber performance? The difficulties are compounded by the confusing terminology. Terms such as canzona, sonata, capriccio, sinfonia, and the like are frequently used for pieces of an essentially similar nature. Many of our modern difficulties here undoubtedly spring from our tendency to study 17th century musical categories by some term, such as "the sonata" or "the canzona."¹

¹ William S. Newman: The Sonata in the Baroque Era, Chapel Hill, The University of North Carolina Press, 1959, revised edition 1966. (See page 23 for a summary of earlier attempts to make a distinction between the sonatas and the canzona.) Eunice C. Crocker: "An Introductory Study of the Italian Canzona for Instrumental Ensembles and Its Influence Upon the Baroque Sonata," Ph. D. dissertation, Radcliffe College, 1943.

It is questionable whether the composers themselves distinguished between these terms, and even if so, whether they applied them consistently. The term "sonata," for example, had not yet acquired any specialized significance but was used in its general meaning for pieces that were played rather than sung.

In order, then, to make distinctions in this repertory, one must turn to stylistic criteria. The vast majority of instrumental ensemble pieces in the early part of the century, whether entitled sonata, canzona, or something else, find a common ancestor in the canzona da suonare, and hence the focal point of the stylistic development centers in changes that the introduction of the basso continuo affected in the canzona. Two notable exceptions are to be made: pieces entitled sinfonie, and the sonatas by Salomon de' Rossi. Both of these exceptions will be dealt with in the chapter on secular instrumental music.

Published basso continuo parts make their appearance somewhat later in instrumental than in vocal music, although the practice undoubtedly goes equally far back in both types of music. The earliest known instrumental example is Antonio Troilo's Canzoni da suonare, published in 1606.² The basso continuo is merely an extract of the lowest sounding notes and does not alter the compositional framework. As in sacred vocal

² Antonio Troilo: Canzoni da suonare col suo Basso Generale per commodita degli Organisti. A quatro et cinque voci. Venetia, Amadino, 1606.

music it is not counted as a real part, so that a canzona a quattro is for four single-line instruments plus a chordal basso continuo instrument.

The inclusion of a basso continuo in the canzona soon resulted in textural changes. Since the basso continuo took over part of the function of the inner voices, that of providing complete harmony, the number of contrapuntal parts were reduced to three to two. The earliest known pieces of this kind appear in 1610 in a collection of sacred (vocal) concertos by Paolo Cima.³ The collection contains six instrumental works of which four are sonatas by Cima himself and two are capriccios by his brother, Andrea. These six pieces are in two, three, and four parts with one part always a bass. The table of contents identifies all the pieces by the number of independent parts. A sonata a due therefore consists of two real parts (a bass plus one other) and a basso continuo which, by and large, doubles the real bass line.

Most likely the development of the new genre came as a conscious imitation of the practices in sacred vocal music. The principal use of the older canzona had been for the church service where it frequently would have been heard in conjunction with sacred vocal concertos for one or a few voices. Composers could quite naturally be expected to try out these new vocal textures in instrumental music; the appearance of the earliest pieces in the new category in a collection of sacred vocal music is surely no coincidence. Up to 1620 most of the canzona-sonatas continued to appear in vocal collections, but by that time the market was ripe for more substantial,

³G. P. Cima: Concerti ecclesiastici a 1. 2. 3. 4. 5 & 8 voci. . . & sonate per Instrumenti a due, tre, e quatro. Milano, Lomazzo, 1610.

purely instrumental collections.

One of the first publications devoted solely to the canzona-sonata is the book of canzonas by Frescobaldi published in 1623, and then re-issued several times with additional new numbers and with alterations in some of the older ones.⁴ There are five printed parts, Canto I and II, Basso I and II, and the Basso generale. The following summary of the contents of the 1628 edition shows the disposition of the textures and the number of canzonas in each texture:

Canto solo (four canzonas)
Basso solo (four canzonas)
A due canti (five canzonas)
A due bassi (four canzonas)
Canto e basso (six canzonas)
A tre, due bassi e canto (three canzonas)
Due canti, e basso (three canzonas)
A quattro, due Canti, e due Bassi (five canzonas)
Canto, alto, tenor, e basso (three canzonas)⁵

As in Viadana's concertos, there are pieces for variety of combinations from one to four voice-parts. However, the Frescobaldi canzonas, except for the three last, feature only treble and bass and do not make use

⁴G. Frescobaldi: Il primo libro delle canzoni, ad una, due, tre e quattro voci. Roma, Robletti, 1623. Reissued, with corrections and additions by Robletti in 1628. This version was edited and scored by the organist B. Grassi, and published by Masotti in Rome the same year.

⁵The table is from the third edition, by Masotti in 1628, as quoted in Claudio Sartori, Bibliografia della musica strumentale italiana stampata in Italia fino al 1700. Biblioteca di Bibliografia Italiana XXIII. Florence Olschki, 1952, entry 1628i. Sartori's work has been indispensable in working on the instrumental ensemble music.

of the alto and tenor. As in Cima's sonatas, the basso continuo, although indispensable in most of the pieces, is treated as subordinate to the basic part-structure and not counted among the principal parts. The real parts (i. e., those mentioned in the table) are always imitative and often rhythmically animated. By contrast, the slowly moving basso continuo is devoid of intrinsic interest. Thus a canzona a due canti focuses the activity in the upper parts. In the pieces for treble and bass these two parts engage in imitations, and the basso continuo is a version of the real bass, simplified by the removal of most of the figuration. The basso continuo appears much the same way as in the pieces for two trebles. Similar simplification is found whenever a bass in one of the principal parts, even if it is a basso solo. The solo bass pieces, in other words, have only one real part which contains in itself a substantial amount of rhythmic activity. All the diminutions are taken away from the basso continuo part, leaving only the harmonically active notes. This procedure, incidentally, seems to have originated with Viadana in his Cento Concerti.

The subordinate role of the basso continuo has been stressed as a most important stylistic feature of the early 17th century canzona and it may therefore seem inconsistent that in some of Frescobaldi's pieces, those for canto solo, the basso continuo is an equal partner to the solo. There is, however, a natural explanation for this phenomenon. One of the outstanding features of the canzona is the use of imitations. A composer writing a canzona for one solo instrument is therefore faced with a

dilemma: he will either have to give up using imitations or put them in the basso continuo.⁶ In his canzonas for canto solo Frescobaldi chose the latter alternative. The result is a group of canzoni a due for treble and basso continuo. Since the common 17th century procedure was not to let significant contrapuntal material be presented by the basso continuo by itself, this solution was abandoned by later composers. If two imitative parts were to be used, the pieces were designated a due and included two different parts for single line instruments in addition to the basso continuo. The canzona for canto solo is therefore exceptional in its texture and represents a blind alley in the development of musical style.

Frescobaldi's solo treble sonatas with imitative bass throw an interesting light on his attitude toward doubling the basso continuo line with a solo instrument. If such doubling had been of any concern to him, he most certainly would have included a bass line instrument in these pieces when the bass part has significant material. His primary concern was very different -- to write pieces for a solo instrument without sacrificing the outstanding characteristics of the canzona. The solo treble pieces actually suggest that the duo sonatas for treble and bass might possibly be performed with only the high instrument and the continuo instrument. In that case the keyboard player would play from the bass part rather than the

⁶ It is, of course possible to have imitations on a solo violin by using double stops. This procedure is attempted by Biagio Marini in his Sonate, Symphonie, opus 8, (Venice, Gardano, 1626.) but he had no immediate followers.

continuo part, since much of the imitative material is lost in the simplified continuo line.

The bass part might conceivably be omitted if the basso continuo can take over its function, but nothing indicates that a bass instrument can be added to the continuo when it is not specified. Such a situation would only occur in the pieces for two trebles, and nothing suggests that these pieces would be enhanced by a firmer projection of the bass. Their continuo lines are not melodically significant; they only suggest the proper chords to the continuo player.

The variety of combinations found in the Frescobaldi canzonas is representative of this type of collection for two or three decades to come. Many composers, however, favoured works in two or three parts, and for good reason. We have already seen how the solo canzona, by virtue of its texture, stretches the strict definition of the canzona. The four part canzona, on the other hand, maintains the archaic part-structure of its 16th century predecessor without taking advantage of the basso continuo to reduce the number of parts. The canzonas in two or three parts conformed to the new style but did not sacrifice the essential nature of the old; and so these eventually prevailed.⁷

Works in two or three parts still allow for a good many different combinations of instrument ranges. Only a few came into widespread use,

⁷ Collections solely devoted to two or three part canzonas are found already in the 1620's and came to dominate the field after the middle of the century.

and also this seems very sensible. The middle parts by nature tend to project less clearly than the outer, and functioning frequently as fillers, they are made superfluous by the basso continuo. Two or more imitating parts in the bass register create a thick and muddled sound. In contrast, two imitating high parts not only are clearer and more attractive but already had a long tradition as a sonorous ideal: vocal music for two high parts and bass was very popular at the end of the 16th century and remained so through the 17th. The large number of chamber duets featuring that combination bears witness. Secular instrumental music in the early Baroque also capitalized on this texture, and so almost inevitably the canzona-sonata was influenced. Two combinations in particular came to prevail. One, consisting of two treble parts and the basso continuo, was known as a sonata a due. The other, for two trebles, bass, and basso continuo, was known as the sonata a tre. These are not the only types encountered, but they are by far the most frequent. The sonata a due for treble and bass is the most common exception, and some whole collections are devoted to it.⁸

The differentiation between contrapuntal parts and the basso continuo encountered in the Frescobaldi canzonas, remains valid throughout the 17th century and possibly persists much longer. The polyphonically

⁸For example, M. Cazzati, Sonate a due istromenti, cioe violino, e violone, op. 55. Bologna, (n. p.) 1670.

active lines are counted as real parts; the basso continuo is considered an addition. Example IV-1 shows an excerpt from the last movement of the fourth sonata in G. M. Bononcini's Opus VI. Entitled "Sonatas for two violins,"⁹ the collection has, as one would expect, three printed parts, a part for each of the violins and one for the basso continuo. The movement in question starts with a first violin theme of predominantly sixteenth-note motion which is imitated in an abbreviated answer by the second violin. The two parts then engage in a motivic interplay based mostly on ascending sixteenth-note scale figures and the jagged leaps of the countersubject. The bass, in contrast to the busy upper parts, moves primarily in quarter notes. It contains no thematic material, but simply furnishes the organ player with the harmonic foundation of the chords he should play.

Example IV-2 shows the beginning of a duo sonata for violin and cello. It is the opening of the 4th sonata of Legrenzi's Opus X.¹⁰

⁹ Giovanni Maria Bononcini: Sonate da Chiesa a due Violini, opera sesta. Venice, Gardano, 1672. The work was reprinted by Monti in Bologna in 1677 with a slightly altered title: Suonate a due violini con il basso continuo per l'organo. Seven of the sonatas have been scored by William Klenz and included in the supplement to his Giovanni Maria Bononcini, Durham, North Carolina, Duke University Press, 1962, pp. 142-202.

¹⁰ Giovanni Legrenzi: La Cetra. Libro quarto di sonate a due, tre e quattro stromenti. Opera Decima. Venice, Gardano, 1682 (first edition by the same printer in 1673). Opus X contains a variety of sonatas in two, three and four parts. Sonata No. 4 is available in modern edition as No. 84 of the Hortus Musicus, Kassel; Baerenreiter (n. d.). In the original table of contents, it is listed, after three sonatas for two violins, as Sonata quarta a 2, violino e viola da braccio. The expression, "viola da braccio," is commonly used in Venice in Legrenzi's time for the cello. See the chapter on the bowed bass instruments for a discussion of this terminology.

Example IV:1. G. M. Bononcini: Sonata for two violins and basso continuo, opus 6, no. 4, last movement.

The image displays a musical score for a sonata in G major, Opus 6, No. 4, by Giovanni Maria Bononcini. The score is arranged in four systems, each containing three staves: two for violins and one for the basso continuo. The tempo is marked 'Allegro'. The key signature is one sharp (F#). The first system shows the beginning of the piece with a rapid sixteenth-note pattern in the first violin and a steady bass line in the continuo. The second system features a more melodic first violin part and a continuo line with some chromaticism. The third system has a complex, fast-moving first violin part with many sixteenth-note runs. The fourth system concludes the excerpt with a return to a more rhythmic first violin part and a simple bass line.

From W. Klenz: G. B. Bononcini of Modena, Durham, Duke University Press, 1962. Copied by permission.

Example IV:2. G. Legrenzi: "Allegro," from sonata a due, opus 10, no. 4,
for violin, violone, and basso continuo.

Allegro

6 76 6 6 6

76 [6] 5 6 [#] 6 6 6# 43

6 [#] b b # 6

As in Bononcini's piece, two independent contrapuntal parts engage in a lively interplay, accompanied by a melodically insignificant basso continuo. The cello part is only remotely related to the continuo since many of its melodically independent figures do not even touch on the pitches in the continuo part.

Although these sonatas by Bononcini and Legrenzi have three separate parts, they are not trio sonatas (i. e., sonate a tre) as this term was understood in 17th century Italy. A true trio sonata needs three independent parts plus the basso continuo. Example IV-3 shows such a movement from Corelli's Opus I. The distribution of the real parts is clearly described in the title, "Church Sonatas for Three Instruments, Two Violins, and Violone or Theorbo, with a Bass [-o continuo] for the Organ."¹¹ The first violin states a theme to the accompaniment of the organ. After two and a half measures the second violin begins an imitation at the 5th above which is followed in turn, after three measures, by the theme in the violone. Then all three solo instruments continue with motivic imitations. Although the two upper parts dominate at times, the violone unquestionably has a real contrapuntal function. The basso continuo on the other hand lacks most of the animated motivic material and retains only the notes necessary for a proper realization.

¹¹ Arcangelo Corelli: Sonate a tre, doi violini, e violone, o arciliuto, col basso per l'organo. Roma, Mutij, 1681. Several modern reprints, such as that edited by Waldemar Woehl, Kassel, Baerenreiter, 1933, exist.

Example IV:3. A. Corelli: "Allegro", from Sonata a tre, op. 1, no. 10.
for two violins, violone, and basso continuo.

Allegro

2 6 4 3 6 4 3 5 4 3

5 6 6 7 # 2 6 [4 #] # 4 3

Example IV:3. (cont.)

The first system of the musical score consists of four staves. The top two staves are in treble clef, and the bottom two are in bass clef. The music is written in a key signature of one flat (B-flat) and a 2/4 time signature. The notation includes various rhythmic values such as eighth and sixteenth notes, as well as rests. The bass staff contains several figured bass notations: $6\ 7\ \#$ in the first measure, $\#^{\flat} 8\ 4\ 5\ 6$ in the second measure, and $\frac{6}{5}\ 4$ in the third measure.

The second system of the musical score consists of four staves, continuing the piece from the first system. It maintains the same key signature and time signature. The notation includes various rhythmic values and rests. The bass staff contains several figured bass notations: $4\ 4\ 5\ \flat\ 4\ 3[4]$ in the first measure, \flat in the second measure, and $4\ 3[\#]$ in the third measure.

The observations made above apply only to the church sonata, and not to secular instrumental music. It is therefore most important to distinguish between the two, an observation that can usually be made by examining title pages. Generally speaking a collection entitled Sonate, unless specifically designated as da camera, contains only works for church. From about the middle of the century the specific continuo instrument called for also provides a useful clue. When the organ is named, the collection contains church sonatas; when the harpsichord or another plucked instrument such as the archlute is named, it contains dances or chamber sonatas. The distinction is a logical one and is observed in vocal as well as instrumental music.

The reckoning of the parts in the Italian church sonata as distinguished above, is valid as far as this study goes (i. e. up to around 1700). The conclusions can be checked to some extent in Sartori's Bibliographia. Duo sonatas, contrary to common belief, are usually published in three parts, as in the case of Bononcini's Opus VI, whereas real trio-sonatas -- sonate a tre -- have four parts.¹² Collections in which the number of parts varies from piece to piece can be tentatively checked in Sartori by

¹² Few modern writers make the distinction between the sonata a due and the sonata a tre but consider both as "trio-sonatas". Newman (The Sonata in the Baroque Era, p. 52) justifies this by citing examples of inconsistent useage of these terms. His examples, however, are either from secular music (where the reckoning of the parts is based on an entirely different rationale), from others countries, or from a later time.

counting the number of pages filled by each part. Thus a collection containing half sonatas for two violins and half for two violins and bass, in which the violone part has about half as many pages as the basso continuo, most probably uses the violone only in the pieces for two violins and bass. Although not infallible, this use of Sartori by and large has been confirmed by an extensive checking of original publications.

A careful reading of Sartori, however, also reveals some inconsistencies. These are of two kinds. Some works include, according to the criteria set up above, a superfluous bass part. In other works the bass part is omitted when its presence seems to be demanded by the title as well as by the nature of the music.

The existence of an extra bass part in some sonatas is of special interest since that would seem to support the modern theory of bass-line doubling. The large majority of works of this kind were published after 1680, and a typical example is Giuseppe Torelli's Sonate a tre, Opus I.¹³ The work has five printed parts: the usual two violins, cello, and basso continuo, plus a fifth part for "theorbo or violone" duplicating the basso continuo. Similar added parts crop up in a number of subsequent collections both by Torelli and by other composers. Although many of these collections clearly contain church sonatas, they invariably are given special titles. The most common change is the substitution of sinfonie a tre for

¹³ Giuseppe Torelli: Sonate a tre stromenti con il basso continuo. Opus I. Bologna, Micheletti, 1686.

sonate a tre.¹⁴ The term sinfonia is used with a very specific meaning in dance collections right back to the beginning of the century, but is not used at all in the church repertory until after 1670. Then sporadic instances of church usage occur up to 1686 when all of a sudden a relatively large number of cases is found, particularly in the works of such Bolognese composers as Bononcini and Torelli. The church sinfonia has very little in common with its counterpart in the da camera repertory and derives in fact from a different application of the term sinfonia--namely from orchestral music, such as the opening piece of an opera. One important work in establishing the connection is Torelli's Opus V, "Sinfonie for Three, and Concertos for Four Instruments,"¹⁵ which also contains an added bass part. The sinfonie in Opus V are simply traditional sonate a tre, just like the pieces of his Opus I, except that the preface suggests the possibility of orchestral performance:

If you enjoy playing these pieces, it may not displease you to reinforce all the parts, if you want to discover my intention.¹⁶

¹⁴ For example: G. Bononcini: Sinfonie a tre Istromenti, col basso per l'organo. Op. 4. Bologna, Monti, 1686. There are five printed parts, just as in Torelli's Opus I.

¹⁵ G. Torelli: Sinfonie a tre, e concerti a quattro. Op. 5. Bologna, Micheletti, 1692.

¹⁶ "Se ti compiaci suonare questi Concerti non ti sia discaro moltiplicare tutti gl'Instromenti, se vuoi scoprire la mia intentione." F. Giegling ("Torelli," Musik in Geschichte und Gegenwart) holds that the doubling of the parts applies only to the concertos and not to the sinfonie. The word "concerto," however, is generally used with a much broader meaning for almost any piece of music, including pieces with voices. In this particular case the wording is non-restrictive; questi

The pieces will of course have a different effect if the parts are reinforced, and Torelli clearly desired that this richer effect be sought.

The orchestral performance of sinfonie is corroborated by the rich holdings of scores and performance materials in the archives at San Petronio in Bologna. This repertory consists of concertos, mostly for one or two trumpet soloists, and sinfonie. A substantial number of these pieces are by Torelli and must have originated before the orchestra at San Petronio was dissolved in 1695.¹⁷ The sinfonie are orchestral pieces, very different in form and content from the church sonata. Two things stand out. First, no apparent distinction exists between sinfonia and concerto: these terms are often used interchangeably. Secondly, the performance material preserved at San Petronio is remarkable for the unusually large number of bass parts. The Torelli sinfonie from Opus V, then, are surely predecessors of the more developed types found at San Petronio, and are linked to the later pieces by being orchestral rather than solo works.

The emphasis on the bass in the San Petronio sinfonie has implications for the Torelli sonatas, Opus I. The extra bass part in this work undoubtedly was added to facilitate orchestral performance. The distinctions between sonata and sinfonia were probably not yet as clear as they came to be. Significantly, after Opus I, Torelli never again used the

concerti--these concertos--seems to refer to the whole of the contents rather than to one specific part.

¹⁷ The information about the San Petronio concertoes and sinfonie is taken from Jean Berger, "Notes on some 17th Century Compositions, " Musical Quarterly, v. 37 (1951), pp. 362-64.

title "sonata," in a publication but preferred sinfonie and concerti, thereby making more clear his preference for orchestral performance.

The interest in orchestral sonorities at San Petronio can be traced back to M. Cazzati, the Maestro di Capella there from 1657-1671. In his works are the only other 17th century church sonatas with the basso continuo doubled--hardly a coincidence. The most important Cazzati examples are the sonatas of Opus XXXV for two, three, four and five instruments, some of which include the trumpet.¹⁸ Whereas in his Opus I Torelli assigns the added part to the theorbo or violone, Cazzati specifies Tiorba, o contrabasso. On the rare occasions that the double bass is mentioned in the 1660's and 70's, it always seems to serve as the foundation of an orchestra.¹⁹ Several of the larger pieces in Cazzati's Opus XXXV imply orchestral performance. The sonatas for four strings and trumpet are nothing less than incipient concertos, so that both the doubling of the string parts and the support of a double bass are more appropriate.

Cazzati also employs "superfluous" bass-line doubling in his duo sonatas, op. 18.²⁰ Here, however, the added bass is optional and can

¹⁸ M. Cazzati: Sonate a due, tre, quattro e cinque, con alcune per tromba. Op. 35. Bologna, Silvani, 1665.

¹⁹ See the chapter on "Bowed Bass Instruments," the section on the "Double Bass."

²⁰ M. Cazzati: Suonate a due Violini col suo Basso continuo per l'organo, & un altro a beneplacito per Tiorba, o Violone. Venice, Magni, 1656.

be played, according to the title, by a theorbo, or a violone. Because this bass is not obligatory, Cazzati seems to say that such added parts do not properly belong in the solo instrument repertory. His interest in rich sonorities apparently was enough of a consideration to have it included.²¹

The second category of exceptions consists of works in which the bass part is mentioned as optional when it really is obligatory. There are about half a dozen such works, among which is G. C. Arresti's "Sonatas for Two and Three Instruments, with an Optional Part for the Cello."²²

The sonatas a tre all have a contrapuntally important cello part containing

²¹ The added bass part was also included in the two reprints published in Bologna (Benacci, 1659, and Monti, 1679). The only known copy (in Lüneburg, Ratsbucherei) of a third reprint published in 1674 in Antwerp by Phalese contains only parts for the two violins and the organ. Sartori (Bibliographia...) assumes that the fourth part is lost. This edition, however, has no mention of the optional bass part in the title. Quite possibly the printer, not being familiar with Bolognese practices, saw no point in including an extra bass in a collection of duo sonatas and simply omitted it.

²² G. C. Arresti: Sonate a 2, & a tre (sic). Con la parte del violoncello a beneplacito. Op. 4 Venice, Gardano, 1665. Other works with a similar option are Bernardo Tonini, Suonate da chiesa a tre, due violini & organo, con violoncello ad libitum, Op. 2, Venice, Sala, 1697; Pirro Albergati: Suonate a due Violini con suo basso continuo per l'organo, & un altro a beneplacito per tiorba, o violoncello, Bologna, Monti, 1683; Giuseppe Colombi: Sonate a due violini, con un bassetto viola se piace, op. 4, Bologna, Monti, 1676. (The bassetto di viola is an instrument in the same general range as the vioione and the cello. The term may, in fact, refer to the cello. See the chapter on Bowed Bass Instruments.)

imitations and florid motion. Consequently, the participation of the cello should be required. The fact that the composer used the expression a tre in the title shows that he was aware of the true nature of the texture, and it is peculiar that he allowed the cello to be left out. It is possible, of course, that he simply used the option to attract more customers: not all churches employed a cellist.²³ Leaving out the cello, however, considerably alters the nature of the texture. The basso continuo is a much simplified version of the cello part and contains mostly long notes. Hence, when the sonatas a tre are performed without the cello the bass is static and the total impression is that of a sonata a due. Arresti's intention may therefore have been to point out that his sonatas legitimately may be used as triosonatas and also as duosonatas.

Arresti's Opus IV is the earliest known collection of sonate a tre with optional bass. When later composers write similar works they follow his procedure rather closely. Some do not, however, make the same distinction between the cello part and the basso continuo. In B. Tonini's church sonatas a tre,²⁴ these two parts are essentially the same.

²³ It appears that many churches at this time must have employed two violin players since these instruments are required in a great many choral works. In such choral works one can often discern the same reluctance as in Arresti's sonatas to make a bass line instrument obligatory. Cavalli, for example, in his Musiche sacre (1656) includes a cello part but allows its performance on any bass instrument available, or even to leave it out altogether (see above, "Sacred Vocal Music I").

²⁴ Bernardo Tonini: Suonate da chiesa a tre, due violini & organo, con violoncello ad libitum. Op. 2. Venice, Sala, 1697.

Unless the organist had a two manual instrument and used a registration that would bring out the bass, the result of using only the organ without a cello would have been to weaken the bass. The omission of the cello in this case is not easily explained on musical grounds, and one is left with the impression that the purpose was to make the collection useful to a larger number of people.

The examples with too many or too few parts in 17th century Italian church sonatas are distinctly exceptions to the large number of works that constitute the main body of the repertory. As far as basso continuo doubling is concerned the outstanding feature of this repertory is that a bass-line instrument is only used when its part is of contrapuntal nature, i. e., contains imitations or florid motion. In such cases there is almost invariably a separate bass part in addition to the basso continuo. The reason for strengthening the bass is clearly to bring out the thematic material. If the bass contains little or no thematic material the part is played by the organ alone. The work is then designated according to the number of the imitating parts as sonate a due.

The exceptions discussed above throw further light on the general attitude in 17th century Italy towards strengthening the bass line in church sonatas. Added bass parts are only found in works intended for orchestral performance, that is in works where all the parts are reinforced by doublings. Strengthening the bass line was therefore not an ideal in itself but simply a way to maintain a firm enough foundation in larger

ensembles. In chamber works, with one player to a part, there are no signs that a bass line instrument ever was included unless required by the contrapuntal nature of the part. On the contrary, some composers were willing to eliminate the bass-line instrument even in works where it rightfully should have been included. If one were to generalize on the basis of this admittedly scanty material, it seems that the prevailing tendency in sacred chamber works was not to double the basso continuo but to reduce the participation of bass line instruments.

CHAPTER V
SECULAR INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC

In the two musical genres dealt with above, bass-line doubling was not practiced except where specifically prescribed by the composer. In secular instrumental music the situation is different: at the very end of the 17th century it appears that the basso continuo may have been doubled even in works which do not include a separate part for a bass-line instrument. The case for doubling can be made only on stylistic grounds, and this explains the somewhat elaborate attention to be given to certain details in the development of the repertory in question.

It is common to consider the sonata da camera as the dominating form of secular instrumental music in Italy during the 17th century. This is, however, an oversimplification. The chamber sonata came into being, as a distinct form, only after 1670 and is therefore not representative of the 17th century as a whole. The secular repertory before 1670 is dominated by dance music and is best referred to as such.

The introduction of the title sonata da camera seems to have come as a result of changes in the function of dance music. Titles of dance publications from the first half of the 17th century simply list the kinds of dances included and rarely contain the word "sonata" or the qualification da camera.¹ During the 1660's composers suddenly start to make

¹The terms da camera and da chiesa are used in the early part of the 17th century but not consistently. T. Merula's Canzoni, overo sonate concertate per chiesa, e camera. . . (Venice, Vincenti, 1637), contains no dance

a distinction between dances actually used for dancing -- per ballare -- and stylized dances intended to be played "in the chamber", apparently for aural entertainment.² During the 1670's the latter kind came to dominate. Earlier in the century it was common to put all the dances of one kind together and number them consecutively. The performer then could choose the dances he needed and put them in an order suitable to the occasion. Now after 1670 the composer himself invariably chooses the pieces that are played together as well as their order. The resulting multimovement work became known as a sonata da camera.³ This term, while also found earlier in the century, now came into common use to distinguish, not between church and chamber music, but between stylized dances and those used in the ballroom. Significantly, the development of the dance into a sophisticated musical form

music and the title simply indicates that the pieces may be played in the chamber as well as in church.

² This is often reflected in titles, such as in G. B. Vitali's Balletti Correnti ala Francese, Gagliarde, e Brando per Ballare. Balletti, Correnti, e Sinfonie da Camera a quattro Stromenti. (Bologna, Monti, 1667.)

³ This title is also used by Legrenzi, in his Suonate da chiesa, e da camera, correnti, balletti, allemande, e sarabande e tre. Op. 4 (Venice, Vincenti, 1656). Legrenzi follows the common practice of putting all dances of one kind together. The term sonata da camera appears over all the pieces that in earlier publications would have been entitled sinfonia and which usually is used as the introduction to a group of dances. It is uncertain whether Legrenzi was thinking of stylized dances or simply contrasted secular and sacred works. His work, at any rate, falls outside of the main development of the sonata da camera since he still left it to the performer to choose the pieces that were to be played together.

takes place only after the chamber sonata has emerged as a separate category.

The earliest known instrumental works of any kind to feature trio-texture is Salomon de' Rossi's first book of sinfonie and gagliards in three, four, and five parts.⁴ Rossi, being a Jew, would not have written music for use in the Catholic Church, and this collection, therefore, clearly belongs in the secular realm. The work chiefly consists of short pieces called sinfonie. This term, in the early 17th century, is used rather loosely and carries no implications as to form or compositional procedure. It is often attached to a short instrumental piece which is part of a larger work, such as the curtain raiser in an opera and an interlude in a sacred composition.⁵ Rossi's sinfonie, as a whole, show considerable stylistic consistency; most of the outstanding characteristics are present in his Sinfonia No. 1,⁶ given in Example V-1.

⁴ Salomon de' Rossi: Il primo libro delle sinfonie et gagliarde a tre, quattro, e a cinque voci. Per sonare due Viole, ovvero doi Cornetti, & un Chitarrone o altro istromento da corpo. Venice, Amadino, 1607.

⁵ See f. ex. the opening of Monteverdi's Orfeo (vol. 11 of the Complete Works), and the sinfonia in G. Gabrieli's motet In Ecclesis (Historical Anthology of Music, vol. I, p. 175).

⁶ The work is copied from the transcription of Einstein, the original of which is in the Smith College Library. A microfilm of all of Einstein's transcriptions is located in the Music Library at the University of California in Berkeley; for easy reference the staff at the UCB library has prepared a complete list of contents according to which the present work comes in Series II, vol. 10.

Example V:1. Salomon de' Rossi: Sinfonia no. 1 (1607).

The musical score is presented in three systems, each consisting of three staves (treble, alto, and bass clefs). The first system is in common time (C) and the second and third systems are in 3/4 time. The key signature is one flat (B-flat). The notation includes various rhythmic values, including eighth and sixteenth notes, and rests. The score concludes with repeat signs and a final cadence.

It is in binary form with the first part in common time and the second in triple time. Occasionally there is a meter change even within the same part of the binary form, but it is also common that the meter remains the same throughout. The duple section may contain a modest amount of imitation, as in the first measure of Example V-1, but the top line generally dominates. The bass is melodically insignificant. The character of the music is light and flowing; a suitable tempo in the first section might be $\text{♩} = 80$, in the triple section $\text{♩} = 80$.

There is no obvious ancestor for Rossi's sinfonie in earlier instrumental music. During the 16th century secular ensemble music consisted of either dances, or polyphonic pieces of fairly complex nature, and Rossi's sinfonie therefore appears to be an entirely new invention. However, just as other instrumental genres, such as the canzona and the ricercare, are derived from 16th century vocal forms so is the sinfonia. Its immediate ancestor is the popular three part canzonetta. The similarity between the two kinds of pieces is such that the above description of Rossi's first sinfonia in many instances may be used unchanged to describe a canzonetta. Joel Newman, in his study of Rossi's music, observes that "Rossi's trio-sinfonie have so many similarities in atmosphere, rhythmic procedure, texture, and format to canzonette that they may be considered textless canzonette of the binary type."⁷ It appears that Rossi, wanting to write short instrumental

⁷ Joel Newman: "The Madrigals of Salomon de' Rossi". Dissertation, Columbia University, 1962.

pieces, used the framework of the canzonetta and in so doing produced works that fit into the broad category of instrumental works known as sinfonie.

Rossi's first book contains, in addition to the sinfonie, five gagliards: two in four parts and three in five parts. Of those in five parts, two may be performed with only three instruments, thus featuring the same combination as in the sinfonie. This idea apparently met with approval, because in his third book, first published in 1613,⁸ Rossi includes no less than 18 dances in three parts. Equally important, the trio texture was accepted by other composers so that by 1630 it dominated the field of dance music.

The three part canzonette are in the original sources labeled a tre. In this they follow Renaissance practice, which was to indicate in the title the number of performers needed. Rossi's sinfonie also are labeled a tre and so are his dances and those of other composers who used the trio texture. This differs significantly from practice in the church sonata. The difference is perhaps best demonstrated by comparing one of Rossi's sinfonie to a church sonata that has the same number of parts, i. e., two trebles and a bass. In the church sonata the two upper parts are contrapuntally active while the third part, the basso continuo, is not. The latter is therefore not counted among the main

⁸Salomon de' Rossi: Il terzo libro de varie sonate, sinfonie, gagliarde, brandi, e corrente. Per sonar due Viole da braccio, & un Chitarrone, o altro stromento simile. Venice, Vincenti, 1623. First edition published in 1613.

parts and the work is designated a due. The sinfonia may have a completely homophonic texture but is still designated a tre. Expressions such as a due and a tre therefore have different connotations depending on where they are used: in the sinfonie and in dance music they simply indicate the total number of different parts whereas in the church sonata they refer to contrapuntally active parts.

The basso continuo in early 17th century instrumental ensemble music is always mentioned as an adjunct to the main structural parts.⁹ The bass in Rossi's trios is never referred to by any of the terms commonly used for a basso continuo and, moreover, is counted as one of the main parts. It is therefore questionable whether a realization is needed, or even desirable. The texture of the sinfonie is harmonically complete so that it is possible to have a fully satisfactory performance without a basso continuo. The 16th century canzonetta was performed without accompaniment and it would seem reasonable that the same were true of its instrumental offspring, the sinfonia. If so, this also probably applied to the dance music featuring the same texture. It may be argued that the archlute, which is the bass instrument specified by Rossi, essentially is a chordal instrument and therefore, as a matter of course, would have furnished a realization. That, however, is not necessarily the case. In the chapter on the archlute it will be demonstrated that one of the most important functions of this instrument in 17th century

⁹Cf. chapters III, Sacred Vocal Music, and IV, The Church Sonata.

Italian music was to play the bass line alone without adding a realization.¹⁰
Its presence is thus not indicative of continuo realization.

Judging from the works of Rossi's followers it is clear that the bass was treated in a variety of ways, including the use of a single line instrument only. The three surviving books of secular instrumental music by G. B. Buonamente each come with three printed parts for two violins and cello or bass gamba.¹¹ There is no mention of a chordal instrument anywhere, nor is such an instrument needed: as in Rossi's music the three main parts make complete harmonic sense among themselves.

Marco Uccellini (1603-1680) also had his dance music printed with three parts but calls for a basso continuo rather than a bass-line instrument.¹² A third possibility for the performance of the bass in

¹⁰ For a more complete discussion of the function of the bass instrument in Rossi's instrumental works see Chapter XI, the section on "The Arch-lute as a Bass-Line Instrument".

¹¹ G. B. Buonamente: Il quarto libro de varie sonate, sinfonie, gagliarde, corrente, e brandi per sonar con due violine, & un basso di viola. Venice, Vincenti, 1626.

Il quinto libro de varie sonate, sinfonie, gagliarde, corrente, & ariette per sonar con due violini, & un basso di viola. Venice, Vincenti, 1629.

Il settimo libro di sonate, sinfonie, gagliarde, correnti e brandi. A tre, due Violini & basso di viola, o da braccio. Raccolte e date in luce da A. Vincenti. Venice, Vincenti, 1637. All three books have been scored by Einstein.

¹² For example: Sonate, arie, et correnti a 2, e 3. Venice, Vincenti, 1642. The three part-books are marked Canto I, Canto II, and Basso continuo.

early 17th-century dances is found in the works of Biagio Marini (ca. 1597-1665). In his *Opus VIII*,¹³ which contains a large variety of pieces, the sinfonie and the dances are all labeled a tre and include parts for two trebles, a bass, frequently specified to be played by an archlute, and a basso continuo. Although the texture of these pieces is just like that found in the works by Rossi, Uccellini, and Buonamente, a total of four, rather than three instruments is called for.

From observing the different possibilities for performing the bass in early 17th-century dances one is inevitably led to conclude that no fixed practice existed. The bass may be performed in three different ways; by a single-line instrument alone; as a basso continuo; or by both a single-line instrument and a basso continuo at the same time.

Nothing definite is known about the purpose for which the sinfonie were written. Rossi's first two books, which mainly contain such pieces, may well have served for the entertainment of amateur performers, much like the vocal canzonette. In Rossi's third and fourth books the majority of the works are dances and sinfonie, and the same combination soon became standard in works by other composers. The two kinds of pieces are thus associated but it is not clear exactly how. The clue is found in Buonamente's fifth book. As customary at the time, all the dances of one kind are grouped together. At the beginning of the work, however,

¹³ Biagio Marini: Sonate, Symphonie, Canzoni, Pass'emezzi, . . . a 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, & 6 Voci. Venice, Gardano, 1629. The dedication is dated 1626 which presumably is the year of the first edition.

Buonamente chooses a different arrangement and presents what amounts to two small suites, each consisting of a sinfonia, a gagliarde, and a corrente, all in the same key. The implication seems to be that the other pieces may be grouped in a similar way. In Buonamente's seventh book, Vincenti, the printer, explains that "each sinfonia has its brando, gagliarde, and corrente,"¹⁴ indicating that such a grouping must have been a common practice. Later in the century a sinfonia is usually included as the first movement in chamber sonatas.

Among Rossi's instrumental pieces are several entitled "sonata". Stylistically these are very close to the sinfonie, the main difference being that they are longer. Like the sinfonie, the sonatas are labeled a tre, although the bass contains little thematic material. Rossi's sonatas, with their ties to the 16th century canzonetta and the sinfonia, represent a dead end line of development, and had no effect on the church sonata, which grew out of the French chanson and the canzona da sonare.

If surviving publications proportionally reflect the total that was printed, the years 1640-1665 were lean in the output of dance music: only nine titles are listed in Sartori's Bibliografia. Beginning in 1666 there is a sudden increase in publications of secular music. An average of one or two works from each year survives, not counting reprints. The sudden activity coincides with the emergence of a new generation of

¹⁴The statement appears above the first of the sinfonie, which are all grouped together: "Ogni sinfonia ha il suo Brando, Gagliarde e Corente".

composers, among whom are Giovanni Battista Vitali (ca. 1644-1692), Giovanni Maria Bononcini (1642-1678), Giuseppe Colombi (1635-1694).

The majority of works by the new composers features some kind of trio texture, but various other combinations with from two to six parts are also common. Table I lists all the secular works published between 1670 and 1680 according to the number and kinds of instruments used.¹⁵ Comparing the performance of the bass in these works with the practice earlier in the century one finds the same alternatives: the use of either a bass-line instrument alone, a chordal instrument alone, both of these together, or the option of using either one or the other. The last alternative is by far the most common and is found in nine out of 15 works. As in music from earlier in the century, all alternatives are feasible and result in a satisfactory performance.

The dances published during the 1670's are still very simple. Since, as mentioned, these were no longer used for dancing, the composer has greater freedom to shape the pieces from purely musical considerations. This resulted in greater contrapuntal independence of the parts, evidently a result of influence from the church sonata. Once started, this development rapidly gained momentum so that by 1690 one finds works that bear little resemblance to the dances of 20 years earlier. The point is well demonstrated in Antonio Veracini's Opus III, entitled

¹⁵ The table is based on first editions of works that appeared in print between 1670 and 1680 and are listed in Sartori's Bibliographia.

TABLE I

Instrumental combinations used in secular ensemble music in Italy in
the years 1670-1680.

A due

Violin and spinet	1
Violin, <u>violone</u> or spinet	3

A tre

Two violins and <u>violone</u>	1
Two violins, <u>violone</u> or spinet	5
Two violins, <u>violone</u> and spinet	1

A quattro, or more

(Treble, alto, and tenor parts omitted below)

Bass part for <u>violone</u> or spinet	1
Separate parts for <u>violone</u> and basso continuo	3

Total number of works: 15

Sonate da Camera.¹⁶ All the sonatas are a due with parts for violin, violone or archlute, and basso continuo. As far as style is concerned the movements are hardly distinguishable from those found in church sonatas; in performance the most conspicuous difference would be that the basso continuo was played on a harpsichord rather than on the organ. Some of the movements are in binary form, thereby suggesting some kind of dance as a likely ancestor. Most of them are contrapuntal with imitations between the two main parts, as in Example V-2.

Of particular interest is the importance given to the bass. This is reflected in the inclusion of a separate part for a bass-line instrument. A similar situation is found in other chamber sonatas from this time: of the eight secular works a tre published in the years 1690-1693, five have two bass parts. This is in striking contrast to the situation two decades earlier, at which time extra bass parts rarely were included in secular works. The change works hand in hand with the increasing melodic character of the bass, making it desirable to have this part more clearly heard.

Even when the bass in a chamber sonata is imitative, the composer does not always explicitly call for both a bass-line instrument and a basso continuo. A prominent example is Corelli's famous "Sonatas

¹⁶ Antonio Veracini: Sonate da Camera. A due, violino, e violone o arcileuto, col basso per il cimbalo. Modena, Rosati, 1696.

Example V:2 A. Veracini: Sonata a due, opus 3, no. 2, for violin,
violone, and basso continuo. Second movement.

 = editorial slur

for Violin and Violone or Harpsichord, " Opus 5.¹⁷ Out of a total of 12, six are true chamber sonatas, consisting of an opening sinfonia followed by a number of dance movements. The other six, apart from a certain amount of virtuoso display, adhere closely to the style and forms found in church sonatas. Corelli avoids any mention of camera or chiesa in the title, but the option "violone or harpsichord", used in the title, is never found in church sonatas and it would therefore seem that the collection primarily was intended for the chamber.

All through the work the bass has a fairly active part, and this is particularly true of the "church sonatas". The latter are therefore clearly a due, and not solo sonatas as they often are referred to at the present.¹⁸ If one of these sonatas had been played in church at Corelli's time, as well might have happened, the performance convention would have dictated the use of both a bass-line instrument and an organ, in addition to the violin. In the chamber, on the other hand, it would, according to the title, suffice with either a violone or a harpsichord. One is therefore faced with a contradiction resulting from the merger of two different conventions of the past: the title, following an older practice in dance music, calls for only one bass instrument, whereas

¹⁷ Arcangelo Corelli: Sonate a violino e violone o cimbalo. Op. 5. Roma, Santa, 1700.

¹⁸ Actually, the violin, through the use of double stops, often feature two independent parts, and in such cases the texture is like that of a church sonata a tre.

the musical style, which is that of the church sonata, indicates that two would be most appropriate. If stylistic considerations were given first priority, both a bass-line instrument and a basso continuo would be included. The absence of two separate bass parts would not have been a hindrance: the work was originally published in score so that even the violinist had to read from the part on the harpsichord stand, and the violone player could of course have done the same.

The material at hand gives no conclusive proof that bass-line doubling actually was practiced in early 18th century chamber sonatas except when there were parts for each of the two players. The most that can be said is that such doubling was feasible, and that, according to our present understanding of performance conventions, it also would seem to have been desirable when the bass contained important melodic or contrapuntal material.

CHAPTER VI LARGE SCALE DRAMATIC WORKS

In retrospect the birth of opera stands out as a very distinct event; something entirely new had come into being. This impression tends to obscure the new operas' many links with the music of the past. Throughout the 16th century, festive occasions, such as weddings between members of influential families, were celebrated in great splendor. The main attraction usually was a stage play, but included in this were musical intermedii -- or intermezzi -- performed between the acts. These at times called for the participation of large groups of singers as well as instrumentalists. Except for the Florentine experiments, early operas, by and large, were performed under similar circumstances as the intermedii, but had replaced the play as the principal event. As the opera replaced the intermedii, it also inherited and perpetuated important elements of musical practice. A study of the use of instruments in early opera can therefore profitably turn to the 16th-century courtly festivities as a point of departure.

One work immediately suggests itself as the pivot between old and new: the Florentine Intermedii performed at the Medici court in 1589.¹ This took place in the city where only a few years later opera

¹ Intermedii et concerti, fatti per la Commedia rappresentata in Firenze nelle Nozze del Serenissimo Don Ferdinando Medici, e madama Christina di Lorenzo. Venice, Vincenti, 1591. Modern edition by D. P. Walker under the title Musique des Intermedes de "La Pellegrina." Paris, Editions du centre national de la recherche scientifique, 1963.

was born. The principal composers connected with the early attempts in the new dramatic style were all there: Cavalieri was in charge of the musical arrangements; Peri and Caccini both participated as performers.

The music of the Florentine Intermedii is all notated as polyphony with from three to 30 parts. A variety of combinations of voices and instruments is prescribed, from Peri's performance of the four part Dunque fra torbid'onde as a solo accompanied only by an archlute, to massive conglomerations of several vocal choirs, supported by lutes, trombones, viols, cornetti, etc. In some cases, it is evident that the instruments merely doubled the vocal lines, as when a consort of strings participated with an equal number of voices in a four part madrigal. At other times, the number, as well as the kinds of instruments chosen, suggest a different function. Of particular interest are the following instances:

Chi dal destino. Madrigal, sung by six voices, accompanied by leuto grosso, chitarrone, and basso di viola.

O valorose Dio. Performed by four voices, with harp and lira.

Io che l'onde raffreno. Five part madrigal, performed by one solo voice with lute, chitarrone and archiviolata lira.²

In each case there are one or more chordal instruments and one bowed

² Lira da gamba.

instrument. In the first and last of these, the bowed instrument is in the bass range but probably not in the second.³ Since there are more parts than instruments it would seem that each instrument must have played more than one part. This could conceivably have been done by putting the work into tablature. A more practical solution, with the same overall effect, would have been to use the chordal instruments to realize the bass, an art that was known to at least one of the participating performers, namely Caccini.⁴ The use of a lira is somewhat peculiar in that this instrument is designed to play several notes at the same time. It is therefore doubtful that the intention of including a bowed instrument was to reinforce the bass as such. What the lira and the viol have in common is the power to sustain, and their effect in this context is to give more body to the sound.

The first three dramatic works in monodic style to be published were the two versions of Euridice, by Peri and Caccini respectively, and Cavalieri's Rappresentazione di Anima e di Corpo.⁵ Caccini's work fails to reveal anything about the instruments used. The most

³ Since the term archiviolata lira is used of the lira da gamba (in Io che l'onde raffreno), it seems most likely that lira (in O valoroso Dio) refers to the smaller size, the lira da braccio.

⁴ See Chapter VII.

⁵ Jacopo Peri: L'Euridice. Florence, Marescotti, 1600. Giulio Caccini: L'Euridice. Florence, Marescotti, 1600. Emilio de' Cavalieri: Rappresentazione di Anima e di Corpo. Roma, Mutij, 1600.

explicit statement on this question is found in the preface to Cavalieri's Rappresentatione, written by the librettist A. Guidotti. He suggests two different combinations as particularly suitable for the accompaniment: a lira doppia, a harpsichord and an archlute, or, on the other hand, an organo suave and an archlute.⁶ The first combination shows a particularly striking similarity to some of those found in the Florentine Intermedii, but there are also parallels to the second group. Together they strengthen the impression that the sound ideal for the accompaniment was a sustaining instrument in conjunction with one or more plucked ones.

Peri's Euridice does not contain specific information about the combination of instruments but there were four available -- harpsichord, theorbo, lira, and a large lute. Thus combinations similar to those in the works described above were available.

Monteverdi's Orfeo

Of all the early 17th century operas Monteverdi's Orfeo is the most significant, and, then as now, also the one best known. The rather

⁶ Lira doppia is another name for the lira da gamba: it is also called lirone.

Organo suave -- a soft organ -- may well be the same instrument that Monteverdi calls for in Orfeo under the name of organo di legno -- a wooden organ. It may possibly have been a portable chest-organ; in the last act Orfeo, there are two of them on stage, indicating that they must have been of modest size.

elaborate markings of basso continuo instrumentation is still a source of controversy and it is therefore necessary to go into a detailed discussion of this particular aspect. The markings are always given in the past tense -- "This ritornello was played by . . ." -- and reflect what was done at the first performance. As such, they do not necessarily indicate that the work had to be performed this way. The value for the present purpose, of course, is that such specifications give a rare insight into what went on in a known performance.

Some of the more striking aspects of the basso continuo instrumentation can be observed in the second act. Since there are frequent changes, and these sometimes have implications beyond the immediate situation, a summary of how the act unfolds is given below. The setting is the open fields, and present are Orfeo and shepherds. The first six numbers are full of pastoral idyl; Orfeo sings of the beautiful surroundings, and the shepards sing about Orfeo's magnificent powers.

1. After the sinfonia, Orfeo opens with a short song, Ecco pur ch'a voi ritorno. (See Example VI-1, which contains the music up to the beginning of no. 5.)
2. A shepherd sings a short song, Mira ch'a se n'alletta, preceded by a ritornello which also is repeated between the verses. The ritornello is played by one harpsichord, two archlutes, and two small violins alla francese (pochettes).⁷

⁷ For a discussion of the meaning of the term violino piccolo alla francese, see David D. Boyden: "Monteverdi's Violini Piccoli and Viole da Braccio," Annales Musicologiques, Vol. VI, Paris, 1958-63, pp. 387-401.

3. Another short song, In questo prato, involving two shepherds, and structured as no. 2. The ritornello is played by two violins, one Basso de Viola da braccio, one harpsichord and two archlutes. As the shepherd starts singing, after the opening ritornello, the bass is marked: "One harpsichord and one archlute."
4. Still another song structured as no. 2, Qui le Napee. The first stanza is sung by the two shepherds, the second by a chorus of shepherds. The opening ritornello is played by two archlutes, one harpsichord, and two recorders (flautini).
5. A song for Orfeo, Vi ricorda, having four stanzas with a ritornello at the opening and between each stanza. The ritornello has five instrumental parts and was played by five viole da braccio. Since the parts are notated with respectively two soprano clefs, and one each of alto, tenor and bass, the five are obviously of different sizes. In addition, there were one contrabasso, two harpsichords, and three archlutes.
6. Short comment by one shepherd about Orfeo's powers.
7. The Messenger enters, with mysterious exclamations of misfortune. With her entrance, the accompaniment changes to an Organo di legno and archlute. (See Example VI-2) The shepherd, accompanied by harpsichord, archlute and viola da braccio (basso?) briefly asks what discord disturbs the general happiness. A short interchange follows, until Orfeo enters the conversation, and it finally becomes clear that Euridice is dead. The Messenger goes on at some length relating the circumstances.
8. In the following, the two shepherds each express their grief.
9. Orfeo's Tu se'morta, accompanied by organo di legno and archlute.
10. A five part chorus of shepherds.
11. The Messenger sings Ma io, in questa lingua.
12. The Shepherds sing about their sorrow, accompanied by organo di legno and archlute, and alternating with the five part chorus from no. 10. The act ends with a ritornello, which also was used at the very beginning of the work.

Example VI:1. C. Monteverdi: Orfeo. The beginning of Act II.

ORFEO

Ec.co pur ch'a voi ri . torno ca . re sel . ve e piagge ama . te
(Non troppo lento)

da quel sol fat . te be . a . te per cui sol mie not . t'hangior . no

Ec . co pur ch'a voi ri . tor . no . Ec . co pur ch'a voi ri . tor . no .

Questo ritornello fu suonato di dentro da un Clavicembano, duoi Chitaroni, e duoi Violini piccioli alla francese

Ritornello

mf

mf

mf

Example VI:1. (cont.)

PASTORE

Mi . ra ch'a se n'al . let . ta l'om . bra Orfeo de que'faggi Hor che'n fo .

(Andante)

. ca . ti rag . gi Fe . bo da ciel sa . et . ta .

Ritornello

(Allegro)

mf

mf

mf

Su que . st'herbo . sa spon . da po . . siam . cie in va . ri mo . di

(Andante)

Example VI: 1. (cont.)

Musical score for Example VI: 1. (cont.) showing three staves (treble, alto, and bass clefs) with lyrics: *cias.scun sua vo.ce sno . di al mormerio de l'on.de.*

Questo ritornello fu sonato da duoi Violini ordinari da braccio, un Basso de Viola da bruccio, un Clavicembano, et duoi Chitturoni

Ritornello

Musical score for Ritornello showing three staves (treble, alto, and bass clefs) with the tempo marking *(Allegretto)* and dynamic marking *p*.

Musical score for Ritornello (continued) showing three staves (treble, alto, and bass clefs) with a dynamic marking *p* and a breath mark *(h)*.

Musical score for Ritornello (continued) showing three staves (treble, alto, and bass clefs).

Example VI: 1. (cont.)

DUE PASTORI

In questo pra.to a - dorno o - gni sel.vaggio nu.me so.
 In questo pra.to a - dorno o - gni sel.vaggio nu.me so.

UN CLAVICEMBANO ET UN CHITTARRONE

- vente ho per co - stume di far lie - to sog - gior.no.
 - vente ho per co - stume di far lie - to sog - gior.no.

Ritornello

The musical score consists of several systems. The first system features two vocal staves with lyrics. The second system shows the instrumental accompaniment for a harpsichord and guitar. The third system continues the vocal parts with lyrics. The fourth system includes a 'Ritornello' section with a dynamic marking of *p*. The final system shows the instrumental accompaniment for the harpsichord and guitar.

Example VI: 1. (cont.)

Qui
Qui

mf
mf
mf

This system consists of two vocal staves and three piano accompaniment staves. The vocal staves begin with a rest followed by the word "Qui". The piano accompaniment features a melodic line in the right hand and a bass line in the left hand, with dynamic markings of *mf* (mezzo-forte) and *p* (piano).

Pan Dio de' Pa - sto - ri s' u - di a - l' hor do - len - te ri .
Pan Dio de' Pa - sto - ri s' u - di ta - l' hor do - len - te ri .

This system contains two vocal staves with lyrics and three piano accompaniment staves. The lyrics are: "Pan Dio de' Pa - sto - ri s' u - di a - l' hor do - len - te ri ." and "Pan Dio de' Pa - sto - ri s' u - di ta - l' hor do - len - te ri .". The piano accompaniment includes dynamic markings of *f* (forte) and *p* (piano).

- membrar dol - ce - men - te suoi sven - tu - ra - ti a - - mo - ri .
- membrar dol - ce - men - te suoi sven - tu - ra - ti a - - - mo - ri .

This system contains two vocal staves with lyrics and three piano accompaniment staves. The lyrics are: "- membrar dol - ce - men - te suoi sven - tu - ra - ti a - - mo - ri ." and "- membrar dol - ce - men - te suoi sven - tu - ra - ti a - - - mo - ri .". The piano accompaniment includes dynamic markings of *f* (forte) and *p* (piano).

Fu sonato di dentro da duoi Chitarroni in Clavicembano et duoi Flautini

Ritornello

(b)

mf

This system is a instrumental section titled "Ritornello". It consists of two staves for the upper instruments and one staff for the lower instrument. The music is marked *mf* (mezzo-forte) and includes a section labeled (b). The notation features a complex rhythmic pattern with many sixteenth notes.

Example VI:1. (cont.)

DUE PASTORI

Qui le Napee vezzose schie.ra sempre fiò.ri . ta
Qui le Napee vezzo.se schie.ra sempre fio.ri . ta

Con le can.di.de di . ta fur vi . ste a coglier ro . se.
Con le can.di.de di . ta . fur vi . ste a coglier ro . se.

mp

mf

mf

Example VI: 1. (cont.)

mf

Dun . que fa degno Or . fe . o del suon de la tua li . ra

mf

Dun . que fa degno Or . fe . o del suon de la tua li . ra

mf

Dun . que fa degno Or . fe . o del suon de la tua li . ra

mf

Dun . que fa degno Or . fe . o del suon de la tua li . ra

mf

Dun . que fa degno Or . fe . o del suon de la tua li . ra

(Allegro)

mf

que . . sti cam . pi o . ve spi . ra au . ra d' o . dor sa . be .

que . . sti cam . pi o . ve spi . ra au . ra d' o . dor sa . be . . .

que . sti cam . pi o . ve spi . ra au . ra d' o . dor sa . be . . .

que . sti cam . pi o . ve spi . ra au . ra d' o . dor sa . be .

que . . sti cam . pi o . ve spi . ra au . ra d' o . dor sa . be . . .

The musical score consists of two systems. The first system features five vocal staves and a piano accompaniment. The vocal parts are in various registers, with lyrics: "Dun . que fa degno Or . fe . o del suon de la tua li . ra". The piano accompaniment is in the right hand, with a melody in the left hand. The second system begins with the tempo marking "(Allegro)" and continues with five vocal staves and piano accompaniment. The lyrics are: "que . . sti cam . pi o . ve spi . ra au . ra d' o . dor sa . be .". The piano accompaniment features a more rhythmic and active texture.

Example VI: 1. (cont)

The musical score is presented in three systems. The first system consists of five staves, all of which are empty. The second system begins with a text block: *Fu sonato questo ritornello di dentro da cinque viole da braccio, un contrabasso, due Clavicembali e tre chitaroni.* Below this text, the word **Ritornello** is written in a bold font. The tempo and dynamic markings *mf* and *(Allegro, ma non troppo)* are placed above the first staff. The music for this system is written across five staves. The first staff contains a melodic line with a fermata and a dynamic marking of *mf*. The second staff contains a similar melodic line with a dynamic marking of *mf*. The third staff contains a melodic line with a dynamic marking of *mf*. The fourth staff contains a melodic line with a dynamic marking of *mf*. The fifth staff contains a melodic line with a dynamic marking of *mf*. The third system consists of five staves, all of which are empty.

Example VI: 1. (cont.)

ORFEO

Vi ri - cor - da o bo - schi ombro - si Vi ri - cor - da o boschi om -

(Più tranquillo)

- bro - si de' miei lung'h'aspri tor - menti quando i sassi ai miei la - men - ti rispondean fat - ti pie -

- to - si Vi ri - cor - da o bo - sch'om - bro - si, vi ri - cor - da o bo - sch'om -

Example VI: 2. Monteverdi: Orfeo. Act II, the arrival of the Messenger.

PASTORE

Mi . ra deh mi.ra Or . feo che d'ogni in . tor . no

(Andante)

ri . de il bosco e ri . de il pra . to . Se . gui pur col

plet . tr'au . ra . to d'ad . dol . cir l'a . ria in si be . a . . . to gior . .

MESSAGGIERA

Ahi ea . so a . cer . bo Ahi fa . t'em . pio e cru .

no. *Un organo di legno e un chitarone.*

(Più ritenuto un poco)

Example VI: 2 (cont.)

de . le Ahi stel.le ingiurio . se ahi ciel a . va . . . ro .

MESSAGG.

[Pastore] Las.sa dunque debb'i . o

Qual suondolente il lie.to di perturba?
Un clavicembalo, chitarone e viola da braccio

3 4 4 3

mentre Orfeo con suo no . te il ciel con . so . la con le pa . ro . le mie passan .

PASTORÉ gli il co . re .

Que . sta è Sil . via gen . ti . le dolci . si .

The vocal solos and small ensembles are most often accompanied by more than one instrument but this never includes two of one kind. Sometimes as many as three instruments, harpsichord, archlute, and cello accompany at one time, but the group never includes two archlutes or two of any of the other members. In the instrumental numbers the situation is different. In the three part ritornelli there are usually two archlutes and one harpsichord; in the five part ritornelli, three archlutes, two harpsichords, and also a cello.⁸

It is a curious circumstance that the instruments are usually specified in the ritornelli but more seldom in the vocal numbers. Initially the impression is given that one standard group was used for the

⁸The way in which the multiple harpsichords and archlutes were used indicates that a distinction was made between what today is called first and second chair players, or, in 17th century terminology, soli and ripieni (which does not entirely coincide with present usage). This distinction helps explain a widespread misunderstanding regarding the use of the archlute, which grows out of a peculiar feature in the source material to Cavalieri's Rappresentazione. In the preface to the facsimile edition (Rome, Casa Editrice Claudio Monteverdi, 1912), the editor, D. Alaleoni, observes, in what may have been the theorbo part used at the first performance, that all the solo numbers are marked Tace. The theorbo thus participates only in the ritornelli and in reinforcing the parts of the chorus. F. T. Arnold (The Art of Accompaniment, p. 47) concludes that the archlute was not as widely used as it sometimes appears, and his opinion is cited in recent literature on the subject. In view of the instrumental combinations recommended in Guidotti's preface to Cavalieri's work, both involving archlute, such an omission is peculiar, to say the least, the more so since the very same groups were widely used by Monteverdi. The disputed part was probably intended for the second theorbo; there could easily have been another part for the first theorbo which now is lost.

vocal accompaniment all the time, unless explicit indications to the contrary exist. Close scrutiny indicates, however, that the ritornelli contain the clue to what goes on in the vocal sections. The ritornelli in act two are all part of songs with several stanzas, and it is reasonable to expect the whole song to have a certain consistent sound. Pursuing this line of thinking, one adjustment needs to be made between vocal and instrumental sections. Since the voice invariably is accompanied by a group of solo instruments, (i. e., only one of each kind), any doublings found in the ritornelli must be eliminated. It goes without saying that the melodic instruments, (i. e., violins, recorders, etc.) play only in the ritornelli.

Proceeding now to the second act there seems to be no basis on which to determine the instruments in the opening aria since the instrumentation of the sinfonia is not specified. Continuing to the second number one finds that the accompaniment of the opening ritornello consists of one harpsichord and two archlutes, and one would therefore expect the voice to be accompanied by one harpsichord and one archlute. In the ritornello of no. 3, there are two archlutes, one harpsichord and one "bass violin," i. e., cello. Reasoning as in no. 2, this results in harpsichord, archlute and cello to go with the voices. However, Monteverdi specifies that the vocal duet is to be accompanied only by harpsichord and archlute; in other words, the same as in no. 2. The existence of markings in the vocal section of no. 3 indicates that

something unusual was done. If nothing had been said, only one archlute should have been eliminated, leaving harpsichord, archlute and cello. The added indication was thus necessary to have the cello omitted.

In no. 4 the ritornello features the same basso continuo instruments as in no. 2 and the vocal section, here as there, should therefore be accompanied by one harpsichord and one archlute.

In Orfeo's aria Vi ricorda (no. 5), a five-part texture is introduced in the ritornelli. It is played by a consort of the violin family in five parts and supported by one contrabasso, two harpsichords and three archlutes. There is thus a cello included, and this instrument together with an archlute and a harpsichord can be expected to perform the vocal accompaniment.⁹ Following Orfeo's aria, the Shepherd has a short song (no. 6) and in the absence of anything to the contrary, it would seem that the same three instruments would continue. This is soon confirmed. After the Messenger's opening statement, accompanied by organ and archlute, the instruments specified for the Shepherd's answer are harpsichord, archlute, and cello. The last change very likely is a return to the instruments used immediately before the

⁹ One might argue that the contrabasso da gamba is the most likely bass instrument since it, rather than the cello, is used to double the bass in Il Combattimento di Tancredo et Clorinda. In Orfeo the combination of cello with archlute and harpsichord is mentioned twice: in act II (no. 7 above) and in act IV. The contrabasso is never used together with the two other instruments and it therefore seems that Monteverdi's preference in this case is the cello.

Messenger and they are the same as those used with Orfeo. Although explicit markings are lacking, Orfeo and the shepherds are apparently accompanied by the harpsichord, archlute, and cello until a change is indicated at the beginning of no. 9, Orfeo's Tu se' morta. The instruments used here are organ and archlute. In no. 12 also the shepherds are accompanied by the organ-archlute combination.

In the second act of Orfeo Monteverdi uses three different combinations of instruments. Two of these are the same as those mentioned by Guidotti (organ and archlute; harpsichord, archlute, and a bowed bass instrument); the third consists of only harpsichord and archlute. In the third act, two other alternatives are introduced: the wooden organ alone and the regal, also alone. (The latter is associated with the under-wordly characters throughout the third and fourth act.) In these five alternatives one can clearly see a continuation of basic ideas in earlier usage. There is a preference for including a sustaining instrument, particularly in the declamatory sections: the harpsichord-archlute combination is used only in the canzonetta-like songs of the shepherds in Act II. The relatively abundant use of organ alone indicates that there was no concern for reinforcing the bass-line. Of the four chordal instruments, archlute, harpsichord, and the two kinds of organs, only the latter are even used alone. The harpsichord is always used in conjunction with one or two other instruments. The archlute is never mentioned as the principal chordal instrument and its function in Orfeo

is far from clear. In much 17th century music the archlute is used to play only the bass-line and not a realization¹⁰ and this may also have been its function in Orfeo.

Later Operatic Practices

After Orfeo the sources on basso continuo instrumentation in opera become scarce. One is left with a few pieces of documentary evidence, often separated from each other by several decades. The evidence, nevertheless, presents a surprisingly uniform picture and it seems that when the practice once had settled, perhaps by 1640, it remained essentially unchanged at least until around 1700. The most important change, as far as the basso continuo is concerned, is that the organ goes out of use. Doni probably reflected a generally held view when he said that "the organs, primarily intended for the divine worship, are best left for use in the churches."¹¹ The harpsichord became the principal chordal instrument. The harpsichord did not, however, play alone but was joined by a cello and usually also by an archlute. The performance of the basso continuo in opera therefore differs substantially from that in other categories of music discussed above in that several instruments are used together. It may seem as if the intention

¹⁰ See Chapter X, section on "The Archlute as a Bass-Line Instrument."

¹¹ G. B. Doni: Trattato della musica scenica (ca. 1635). In his Trattati di musica, Florence, Stampa Imperiale, 1763, p. 107: "gli Organi destinati principalmente al culto divino, si potrebbe lasciare per le chiese."

was to strengthen the bass line, but the tradition from which this practice grows indicates that the main purpose rather was to include an instrument with a sustained sound.

The earliest known piece featuring the simpler basso continuo instrumentation is Monteverdi's Il Combattimento di Tancredo e Clorinda.¹² The preface describes the instruments employed in the first performance as a consort of "arm-viols," and one violone to go with the harpsichord.¹³ The work is printed in score. There is no separate part for the violone and it appears that this instrument must have doubled the bass line throughout.

Unusually complete information about the use of instruments is found in a serenata by A. Cesti, first performed in Florence in 1664.¹⁴ The preface specifies the number of instruments used at the first performance, as well as how they were combined:

¹²Published in 1638 in the Eighth Book of Madrigals, but first performed in 1624.

¹³"Gli instrumenti, cio quattro viole da braccio, soprano, alto, tenore et basso, et con'rabasso da gamba, che continuera con il clavicembalo . . ." For the free translation of contrabasso da gamba see Chapter IX, the section on the contrabasso.

¹⁴Vienna, National Library, MS. 16890. Egon Wellesz, in "Zwei Studien zur Geschichte der Oper im XVII. Jahrhundert," Sammelbande I. M. G., v. 15(1913-14) p. 124ff., argues that the work is not in the style of Marc Antonio Cesti. Whether or not the composer was MarcAntonio Cesti, the date and place of the first performance makes the work most interesting for the present purpose.

Instruments: In the sinfonie the parts have been reinforced in accordance with French usage, that is six violins, four violas, four tenor violins, four bassi di viola, one contrabasso. One small [four foot] spinet, and one large spinet [harpsichord?]. One theorbo and one archlute.

The voices, when singing alone, in duets and in trios were accompanied by a large harpsichord with two registers, the theorbo, and the contrabasso; the eight part choruses had, in addition to the mentioned instruments, a basso di viola, and the little Spinet and sometimes the whole orchestra.¹⁵

The vocal solos are accompanied by three instruments, namely harpsichord, archlute and bass. The same group is mentioned in an account of a musical entertainment in the Doge's palace given by the Sieur De Saint Disdier, who lived in Venice from 1672 to 1674. He tells of an evening party, during which a group of musicians was brought in to perform opera arias. The group, in addition to the singer, consisted of violin, harpsichord, theorbo, and bass.¹⁶ Arias with obbligato

¹⁵ The preface is reprinted in Wellesz, op. cit., p. 124. "Instromenti. Le Zinfonie sono state raddopiate all'uso de concerti di Francia, cio de Sei Violini, Quattro Contralti, Quattro Tenori, Quattro Bassi di Viola. Un Contrabasso. Una Spinettina acuta, et uno Spinettone. Una Tiorba, et Uno Arcileuto.

Le voci a solo, a 2. e 3. furono Accompagnate da una Spinetta grossa a 2 registri; dalla Tiorba e dal Contrabasso, e li Cori a otto oltre li detti Strumenti, da un basso di Viola e dalla Spinettina, et alle Tutti Insieme. "

As in Monteverdi, the term contrabasso probably does not refer to an instrument that would play the bass in the lower octave; for further discussion on this subject see Chapter IX.

¹⁶ Alex. Touissaint de Limogon, sieur De Saint Disdier: La ville e la republique de Venise. Paris, 1680. He is quoted by H. C. Wolff in Die Venezianische Oper in der zweiten Hälfte des 17. Jahrhunderts, Berlin, Elsner, 1937, p. 26.

violin are not found at this time, and the violin probably played the treble part in arias in which there originally were orchestral ritornelli. That would leave the three other instruments free to take care of the accompaniment.

Goldschmidt reports the existence of playing parts for four late 17th century operas in the Barberini library in Rome.¹⁷ There is no part for archlute, but the violone plays continuously throughout the work, including in the recitatives.

Further testimony to the use of an "accompanying group" is found in the payment records at the court of Cardinal Ottoboni in Rome. These records, which cover the period 1689-1740, have been examined by Hansell, who reports that for opera performances several full scores, called originali, were prepared for the harpsichord and lute.¹⁸ The absence of a sufficient number of bass parts led him to the conclusion that some of the violoni must also have played from scores. The sections in which the bass-player really needs a score is in the recitatives; in the other pieces, he, as well as the other players may be guided by the leader of the group. The use of scores by both the archlute and the violone players may therefore indicate that these instruments participated

¹⁷ Hugo Goldschmidt: Studien zur Geschichte der italienischen Oper im 17. Jahrhundert. Leipzig, Breitkopf und Härtel, 1901, vol. I, p. 130.

¹⁸ Sven Hostrup Hansell: "Orchestral Practice at the Court of Cardinal Pietro Ottoboni, "Journal of the American Musicological Society, vol. 19, (1966) p. 400.

in the recitatives as well as in the rest of the music.

As a last item of the documentation of operatic practices may be added the facetious comments of Benedetto Marcello.¹⁹ The Virtuoso di Violoncello, we are told, "always accompany the recitatives an octave higher, especially in the case of tenors and basses." Which pokes fun at the absurdity of a bass instrument trying to escape from the bass range even when (with tenors and basses) least appropriate. "In the arias the cellist leaves out passages at will, introducing different variations every evening."²⁰ Marcello's remarks are all directed towards the manner of playing and he evidently took the participation of the cellist, both in recitatives and arias, for granted.

The Oratorio

In oratorios, as in opera, the use of one or more bass-line instruments apparently was taken for granted. There may, however, be more local variation in the choice of instruments. In the library at the Oratorio dei Gerolamini (olim Filipini) in Naples the performing material for a large number of 17th-century oratorios have been preserved. The material is often incomplete, but where parts for bass-line instruments

¹⁹ B. Marcello: Il teatro alla moda (n. p. ca. 1723).

²⁰ B. Marcello: Il Teatro alla moda, p. 49: "Il Virtuoso di Violoncello . . . accompagnera sempre i Recitativi all Ottava alto (particolarmente de Tenori e Bassi) e nell'Arie spezzerà il Basso a capriccio, variandolo ogni sera"

are extant it is clear that they functioned in a way similar to that in opera. One of the most prolific composers during the 17th century was Tomasso Pagano (d. ca. 1690) who left a number of oratorios, among which is La Morte di Maria Magdalena.²¹ The instrumental bass part is unmarked so it cannot be determined exactly which instruments played. The part is continuous and contains recitatives, arias, instrumental pieces, etc. In the recitatives the vocal line is included but only the first words of the text. For the rest only the bass-line is written down. The bass part in Pagano's other oratorios²² follow the same pattern, and generally speaking, this is also true of those in oratorios by other composers. Occasionally one finds more detailed markings, such as in an Oratorio a 3 voci by D. Fregiotti,²³ another 17th-century composer. The work is scored for two organs, two cellos and archlute. The archlute played from the same part as the first cello, because in the obligato arias the two instruments are notated on separate staves. It would seem logical if both instruments played in all the other numbers. Also here the vocal line is given in the recitatives.

Oratorios written in Bologna show a preference for the archlute as the bass-line instrument. An anonymous work entitled La Sepulture

²¹ Naples, Oratorio dei Gerolamini, MS 425.

²² All the works by Pagano in the library of the Oratorio dei Gerolamini are bound, score and parts together, into two volumes, MSS 425 and 426.

²³ Naples, Oratorio dei Gerolamini, MS 436.

di Christo,²⁴ is possibly the work of the Bolognese cellist Petronio Franceschini. Stylistically it reflects the decades on either side of 1670. The harpsichord and theorbo parts are exactly alike, and both instruments play continuously throughout the work. As in the Naples performance material, the vocal line is given in the recitatives, but otherwise only the bass part appears. Unlike the Naples oratorios, the cello does not participate in the recitatives; it does, however, play in the arias, even when none of the other string instruments participate.

In the San Petronio archives, there is also what appears to be complete sets of performing parts for two oratorios by G. Perti, dating from the last two decades of the 17th century.²⁵ The cello is in these works used only as part of the orchestral tutti. The archlute, on the other hand, has continuous parts so that this instrument participates also in recitatives. Neither work has a separate keyboard part but the score presumably served this purpose. Nothing is said about whether

²⁴ Bologna, San Petronio, MS P. 54.1. There are five vocal parts; 2 vl. I, 2 vl. II, 2 Alto violetta, 2 violone spezzato, violoncello, clavicembalo, tiorba and a full score. The word spezzato (broken, detached) is commonly found in MS bass parts at San Petronio in Bologna. It is used about an instrument that only plays in the orchestral sections, not with the basso continuo, and therefore has prolonged rests. The opposite of a basso spezzato is one that plays continuously, in effect, one that doubles the basso continuo. Such a part may be labeled violoncello continuo, violone continuo, or even basso continuo.

²⁵ These are: MS P. 55.3. Beata Imelda (1686). There are five vocal parts, vl. I, vl. II, alto viola, 2 violoncelli, theorbo and score.

MS P. 57.1. Oratorio-La Passione di Christo (1694). There are four vocal parts, 3 vl. I, 3 vl. II, 2 alto viola, 3 violoncello spezzato, theorbo, and the autograph score.

the chordal instrument was organ or harpsichord, but on the basis of La Sepultura di Christo, the latter appears as the most likely choice. This is to some extent supported by a work of another composer from the Bologna circle, Pirro Albergati's Cantate e Oratorii Spirituali.²⁶ This collection contains two oratorios, and in these as well as in all the cantatas, the harpsichord and the violone/tiorba have identical continuous parts. In other words, the harpsichord and the archlute may be used together, but with the stipulation that a violone can be used as well as the archlute.

Little is known about how Roman practices compare to those in Bologna and Naples. A. Stradella's oratorio San Giovanni Battista,²⁷ first performed in Rome in 1675, contains numerous indications of the use of a solo cello on the bass line. The work calls for a large orchestra divided into a concertino and a concerto grosso. The arias with solo cello all feature florid motion and it seems that what Stradella wanted was to be sure that only one instrument played. The markings therefore probably do not indicate that only the chordal instrument played in the other arias but that all the bass instruments played unless there were indications to the contrary.

²⁶ Pirro Albergati: Cantate, e Oratorii Spirituali a una, due e tre voci con strumenti. Op. 10. Bologna, Silvani, 1694. No score; parts for cembalo, Violone o Tiorba, Canto et Alto, Tenor, Basso, vl. I, vl. II, alto viola.

²⁷ Alessandro Stradella: San Giovanni Battista. Bologna, Civico Museo Bibliografia Musicale, MSS BB/361 and BB/362.

Summary

In opera, unlike the music dealt with in previous chapters, bass-line doubling was practiced through much of the 17th century. The practice seems to have originated in late 16th-century intermezzi, in a tendency, not to reinforce the bass, but to include a sustaining instrument in the accompaniment of vocal numbers. In the earliest preserved operas this tendency has become a guiding principle. A variety of instruments were used on the basso continuo, but whether one instrument was used alone or several together the sustained sound is almost always there. Already at this time one of the most popular combinations was harpsichord, archlute and some bowed bass instrument. These three instruments came to dominate the basso continuo for the rest of the century. The three were not always used together. In opera it seems that harpsichord and a bowed bass often sufficed. In oratorio the archlute frequently was coupled with the harpsichord and its function was quite possibly that of a bass-line instrument. Whichever combination of instruments was used, those playing only the bass line would do so throughout the work, including the recitatives. To facilitate this, the vocal line in the recitatives was always included in the bass part, a practice that ought to be revived by modern editors.

CHAPTER VII SECULAR VOCAL MUSIC

Background. Transitional Song Forms

Early 17th-century secular song is frequently thought of in terms of two outstanding developments: the birth of the recitative, and the transformation of the polyphonic madrigal into an accompanied solo. The first is said to represent an entirely new creation with no apparent ties to the immediate past. The madrigal, on the other hand, is thought to have evolved like the motet and the canzona, the use of the basso continuo resulting in a reduction of the number of voices. The latter process can be observed in works by Monteverdi. His first four books of madrigals are all, as usual at the time, in five parts. The same is true of his Fifth Book, but here a basso continuo has been added. It is optional in the first thirteen numbers; the last six, however, all contain solo passages, and there the accompaniment is obligatory.¹ The final step is taken in the Seventh Book. Here the texture is reduced to one or a few voices with the harmonic support given to a chordal instrument.

Our modern focus on novelties tends to obscure the ties with the past. The year 1600 becomes the dividing line. What comes before

¹ This is all stated in the title: Il Quinto Libro de madrigali a cinque voci. Col basso continuo per il Clavicembano, Chittarone od (sic) simile istromento; fatto particolarmente per li sei ultimi; and per li altri a beneplacito.

consists of vocal ensembles; this is contrasted with the soloistic music that followed. This view is partly derived from consulting the music publications of the time. The repertory before 1600 largely consists of part-songs, but soon after that year is dominated by monodies. This picture, however, is distorted, as there are clear indications of a 16th century Italian tradition of solo singing.

It is true that frottole, madrigals, villanelle, etc., usually were published in part-books, though not always. A different perspective on the performance of frottole in the early part of the 16th century comes with the realization that a great deal of this music also was published for solo voice with lute accompaniment.²

Apart from publications of music, solo performance is mentioned in contemporary writings, and more than casually. Indicative in this respect is Castiglione's opinion, namely that a solo voice accompanied by a single instrument is preferable to part-song.

"Methink," answered Sir Frederick, "pricksong is a fair music, so it be done upon the book surely and after a good sort. But to sing to the viol [il cantare alla viola] is much better, because all the sweetness consisteth in one alone, and a man is much more heedful and understandeth better the feat manner and the air or vein of it when the ears are not busied in hearing any more than one voice; and beside, every little error is soon perceived, which happeneth not in singing with company, for one beareth out another. But singing to the viol with the ditty [il cantare alla viola per

² See B. Disertori: Le frottole per canto e liuto intabulate da F. Bossinensis. Milano, Ricordi, 1954. This book deals with publications in the period 1500-1520.

recitare] (methink) is more pleasant than the rest, for it addeth to the words such a grace and strength that is a great wonder."³

The opinions expressed here are very similar to those held by the early monodists, if not quite as forcefully expressed.

The existence of singers who apparently specialized in solo performance is mentioned by Pietro Aron, in his Lucidario in Musica. Aron wants to establish that Italian musicians are as good as those of other nations, and in doing so, he names the outstanding vocal performers in the principal Italian cities.⁴ He distinguishes between cantori a libro and cantori al liuto, which in this context best are translated as "part singers" and "solo singers." Fifteen men are mentioned as part singers and 12 as solo singers. An additional 11 women are listed as both solo and part singers. Considering that it takes at least four people to perform a madrigal but only one person with a lute to perform a solo, it seems probable that a great many more solos were heard than ensembles.

Castiglione and Aron both fail to specify what kinds of pieces were used for solo performance, and it could conceivably have been an unknown repertory never committed to paper. More likely, the

³ Baldassare Castiglione: Il cortegiano. (1514) In Strunk, Source Readings, p. 284, in the translation by Sir Thomas Hoby (1561). Hoby substitutes the word "lute" for "viola" throughout the above passage; the original wording in those instances if given by Strunk in footnotes, and these have been included in brackets.

⁴ Pietro Aron: Lucidario in musica. Venetia, Scotto, 1545. Fol. 3lv.

part-songs furnished the material, because later in the century such songs were performed as solos as a matter of course. This point is well demonstrated in the reminiscences of Vincenzo Giustiniani, written around 1628, but describing musical developments in the 1570's and onwards. He repeatedly refers to solo performance, and the earliest example relates to his school days:

. . . as for solo singing to the accompaniment of some instrument, the taste of the Neapolitan Villanelle prevailed, and this style was imitated even in Rome.⁵

The villanelle, of course, are all published as partsongs, and were popular particularly in the 1560's and 1570's. After the reference to this form, Giustiniani describes how the musical style and taste changes with the works of Luca Marenzio, and others. He probably is referring to the canzonette, which represent a more sophisticated continuation of the style of the villanelle.

In the span of a short time the musical taste changed, and works by Luca Marenzio and Ruggero Giovanelli appeared, with new delightful invention, the excellence of which consisted in a new air and pleasure to the ear, whether performed as ensembles or as accompanied solos.⁶

These developments apparently took place before 1575, because at that

⁵ Vincenzo Giustiniani: Discorso sopra la Musica (1628) Lucca, Giusti, 1878, p. 14.

" . . . e per cantare con una voce sola sopra alcuno stromento prevalessse il gusto delle Villanelle Napoletane, ad imitazione delle quali se ne componevano anche in Roma . . . "

⁶ Op. cit., p. 14. "In poco progresso di tempo s'altero il gusto della musica e comparver le compositioni di Luca Marentio e di Ruggero Giovanelli, con inventione di nuovo diletto, tanto quella da cantarsi a piu voci, quanto ad una sola sopra alcun stromento, l'eccelenza delle quali consisteva in una nuova aria et gratia all'orrecchio."

time further changes occurred:

In 1575, or shortly thereafter, a new style of singing, very different from what previously had been used, came into being, and was particularly noticeable in performances by solo voice and one instrument.⁷

Giustiniani's description seems to indicate that particularly the villanelle and canzonette were used for solo performance, but surely not to the exclusion of other types. Caccini, in Nuove Musiche, indicates that "madrigals published for several voices . . . sung by a single voice, . . . was then a common practice."⁸

The late 16th-century testimonies about solo songs are supported by music both in publications and manuscripts. One MS in Biblioteca Estense, Modena, dated 1574, contains "Songs, Arias, etc., for One and More Voices, with Accompaniment for the Lute."⁹ Another example is Luzzasco Luzzaschi's madrigals for one to three voices with harpsichord accompaniment,¹⁰ written specifically for the musical establishment

⁷Op. cit., p. 14: "L'anno santo del 1575 o poco dopo si comincio un modo di cantare molto diverso da quella di prima, e cosi per alcuni anni seguenti, massime nel modo di cantare con una voce sola sopra un istromento . . ."

⁸G. Caccini: Nuove Musiche (1602), translation J. Playford, in Strunk, Source Readings, p. 379.

⁹Canzoni, Arie, etc. a voce sola ed a piu voci con accompagnamento di liuto, Modena, Biblioteca Estense, MS C. 311. It contains pieces by Bottegari, Lasso, Wert, Caccini, Striggio, and others. For a discussion of this work, see Carol MacClintock, "A Court Musician's Songbook, Modena MS. C 311." Journal of the American Musicological Society, vol. IX (1956), pp. 177-192.

¹⁰LuzzascoLuzzaschi: Madrigali . . . per cantare, et sonare, a uno, e doi e tre soprani. (1601). Modern edition by A. Cavacchi, Kassel, Baerenreiter, 1965.

at the court in Ferrara where the composer was employed. Published in 1601, the actual writing may have taken place as early as the 1570's, as it is known that Duke Alfonso II jealously guarded the repertory specifically written for his musicians. The songbooks used at Ferrara are among the many lost treasures from the time; with the solo madrigals in mind, it is not unlikely that other songs also would have made use of the solo idiom.

The actual examples of solo literature are scarce, but a fair amount of music exists that has been put down in a form allowing solo performance of part songs. Thus, in Modena, there is a 16th-century MS containing three-part villanelle with accompaniment for the lute.¹¹ A published collection from the pen of Horatio Vecchi contains all kinds of works; madrigals, ballets, capricci, etc., for from three to ten voices, with lute tablature for the arias, ballets and the canzonette.¹² The most important material appeared in the press of the Roman printer Simon Verovio from 1586 on. There are four books of three to four part compositions, all containing tablatures for harpsichord as well as lute.¹³

¹¹ Autori diversi: Libro di Villanelle a 3 voci, con e senza accompagnamento di Liuto. Modena, Biblioteca Estense, MS k.6.31.

¹² Horatio Vecchi: Selva di varie ricreatione, 3-10 parti, madrigali, capricci, balli, arie, canzonette. . . accomodatevi la intavolatura di liuto alle arie, ai balli et alle canzonette. Venetia, Gardano, 1590.

¹³ The four publications are as follows:
Diletto Spirituale. Canzonette a tre et a quattro voci. Con l'intavolatura del Cimbalo et Liuto. Roma, Verovio, 1586.
Ghirlanda di fioretti musicali, Composta da diversi eccellenti Musici. A

The vocal parts are printed in score with the two tablatures on the opposing page, so that both instruments and voices could read from the same page. One might in all these cases argue that the tablature is included to allow for instrumental rendition, but on the background of what is known about solo performance, this was at best a minor concern. The purpose of the publications is to allow for as many options as possible, and the most popular would seem to have been either all vocal parts with or without instruments, or vocal solo with one instrument.

It is of some significance that all the examples of tablatures given together with the vocal parts come in pieces of a light nature. They are primarily villanelle and canzonette, categories that hardly can be distinguished from one another on musical grounds. Giustiniani, when he first talks about solo song, relates this to the style of the villanella. He continues to talk about the new style of Marenzio, without specifying which kinds of pieces, but it should be remembered that a substantial part of the latter's output consisted of canzonette. Altogether, it appears that the few-voiced popular songs, rather than the madrigal, were used for solo performance. Going on into the 17th century, it is this type of song which makes up the bulk of what is somewhat misleadingly called

3 voci. Con l'intavolatura del Cimbalo, et Liuto. Roma, Verovio, 1589.

Canzonette a 4 voci . . . con L'Intavolatura del cimbalo et del Liuto. Roma, Verovio 1591. (Reprint by Vincenti, Venice, 1597).

Lodi della musica a 3 voci, composte da diversi eccti. Musici con L'intavolatura del Cimbalo e Liuto. Roma, Verovio, 1595.

the monodic repertory. The majority of publications to contain solo songs enter them side by side with pieces in two, three and sometimes four parts. Musically speaking, there is little difference between the 16th and the 17th-century brands of canzonette. The simpler specimens are strictly homophonic in nature and whether the solo is supported by voices or by a chordal instrument is of relatively minor importance. Not all canzonette were that simple; 17th-century composers continued to write for more than one voice when they desired to use imitations or special vocal sonorities such as parallel thirds and sixths. In considering this repertory, the difference between what comes before and after 1600 is more a matter of appearance than of sound; the older works were published in part-books, whereas the new type is characterized primarily by the inclusion of the basso continuo together with the voice; in other words, a score arrangement. This is not to negate the innovations of the so-called monodists, but to suggest that the novelty resided in other aspects than the use of a solo voice with instrumental accompaniment. This is corroborated by Caccini's Nuove Musiche. What he considers novel is the affective performance, and his treatise is concerned with a minute description of this particular aspect, including affective ornamentation.

If one assumes that 16th-century part-songs were used for solo performance with a chordal instrument, how did the accompanist figure out his part?

From the examples discussed above, it appears that one way was to make a tablature. This, however, is a cumbersome procedure and there is evidence that the accompaniment at times was derived directly from the bass part. In a letter from Alessandro Striggio to Belisario Vinto in Florence, written in Ferrara in 1584, Striggio describes a composition for two voices that accompanies the letter. It mentions that he has already made out a lute tablature but that he forgot it in Mantova, and goes on to say: "This is of little importance, because signor Giulio [i. e., Caccini] can easily make a realization from the bass on the lute or on the harpsichord."¹⁴ Although Caccini was one of the outstanding musicians of his days it would not be surprising if the art of accompanying from a bass also was known to others.

The nature of the accompaniment in secular song in the 16th century was to substitute a chordal instrument for the lower vocal parts. There is nothing to indicate either that more than one instrument was desired, or that a sustaining bass-line instrument was needed. This clearly comes

¹⁴ Riccardo Candolfi: "Lettere inedite scritte da musicisti e letterati, appartenenti all seconda metà del secolo XVI, estratte dal R. Archivio di Stato in Firenze." In Rivista Musicale Italiana, vol. 20 (1913), pp. 527-554. I am indebted to Anthony Newcomb for drawing my attention to this letter. The full text of the pertinent passage goes as follows:

"Ma avanti io partissi di Mantova, io feci un Dialogo con dua soprani diminuiti d'un altro andare che non è il primo, e ancora che io non l'habbia provato per non lo lassar vedere a persona, io lo mando a V. A. S. Aspettando d'intendere qual piu sarà al proposito per il concerto, havevo ancora scritto la intavolatura per il lautto et me lo scordai in Mantova nel mio partire. Ma importarà poco, poi che il sr. Giulio potra benissimo sonare, o con il lautto, o con il cembalo sopra il basso."

through in Giustiniani's writings. More important, Caccini himself, the pivotal figure in the development of the new style, several times in Nuove Musiche talks in terms of one instrument and nothing more.

Describing a performance of what he calls solo madrigals, which must have taken place in the mid 1590's, he reports about the audience that

. . . . they had never before heard harmony of a single voice, accompanied by a single instrument with such power to move the passion of the mind as those madrigals, both because of their style and because, when madrigals published for several voices were sung by a single voice, as was then a common practice, the single part of the soprano, sung as a solo, could have no effect by itself, so artificial were the corresponding parts. (Underlining added.)¹⁵

The tenor of Nuove Musiche is didactic and Caccini's advice leaves no room to doubt that he preferred to use one instrument alone.

It shall therefore be a profitable advertisement that the professor of this art, being to sing to a theorbo or other stringed instrument and not being compelled to fit himself to others, that he so pitch his tune as to sing his clear and natural voice avoiding feigned tunes of notes. (Underlining added.)^{15b}

Not only does Caccini fail to say anything about a bass-line instrument; as he sees it, more than one participant will hamper the freedom of the soloist, and this freedom is the essence of the new style.

There are no signs that Caccini's followers took a different view of the performance of the basso continuo than he did. The monodic repertory of the early 17th century has been thoroughly studied by Nigel

¹⁵Caccini: Nuove Musiche, in Strunk, Source Readings, p. 379.

^{15b}Strunk, Source Readings, p. 391.

Fortune¹⁶ who found no indications that the accompaniment was to be performed by more than one instrument. On the basis of his findings Fortune actually questions the validity of present ideas of bass-line doubling,¹⁷ possibly being the first one to do so.

Important testimony about the accompaniment of solos comes from Rome around 1640. Several writers describe the singing of Leonora Baroni, who was regarded as one of the finest vocal artists of the day. The French viola da gamba player, Maugars, who visited Rome in 1639, after a glowing tribute to Leonora's singing, reports that

She never needs to ask to be assisted on a theorbo or a viol, without one of which her singing would be wanting, because she plays both instruments to perfection herself.¹⁸

Pietro della Valle also implies that Leonora accompanied herself when he asks "Who is not transported upon hearing Leonora sing to her arch-lute, played in such an honest, yet capricious manner?"¹⁹ The time and

¹⁶ Nigel Fortune: "Italian Secular Song from 1600 to 1635." Thesis, Cambridge University, 1953.

¹⁷ N. Fortune, op. cit., p. 195.

¹⁸ Maugars: Response faite a un curieux sur le sentiment de la Musique d'Italie. Escrit a Rome le premier octobre 1639. In Er. Thoinan: Maugars. Paris, A. Claudin, 1865. p. 37. (Reprint by Baron, London, 1965.)

"Elle n'a pas besoin de mandier l'aide d'une Thuorbe, ou d'une Virole, sans l'une desquelles son chant seroit imparfait; car elle mesme touche les deux instrumens parfaitement."

¹⁹ Pietro della Valle: Della Musica dell'eta nostra. (ca 1640). In Gio: Battista Doni: Trattati di Musica. Firenze, Stampa Imperiale, 1763. Vol. II, p. 256.

"Chi non va fuor di se sentendo cantare la Signora Leonora col suo Arcileuto cosi francamente, e bizzarramente toccato?"

place of these descriptions are telling as they coincide with the early history of the secular cantata. Luigi Rossi and G. Carissimi, prominent figures in this development, lived in Rome and undoubtedly knew the Baroni family. It is therefore possible that these descriptions relate to cantatas as well as to simple songs.

It is at this point apparent that the basso continuo instrumentation in secular song must have differed considerably from that in opera. This may at first seem rather peculiar since the two genres overlap considerably as far as musical style goes. The differentiation makes, however, good sense in acoustical terms. Early 17th-century songs were designed for drawing room performance, and a single instrument for the accompaniment was quite adequate. Operas, on the other hand, were given in larger halls and therefore required the participation of more instruments. The difference in performance between the two genres is confirmed in important sources from the time. A particularly striking example is found among the writings of G. B. Doni, in a passage where he attacks the kind of accompaniment used in opera. After commenting upon the difficulties caused by using several instruments for the basso continuo he holds up as an ideal the solo performance of Leonora Baroni's mother, Adriana, still a prominent singer in 1640:

. . . whoever has heard Adriana sing to the accompaniment of her own harp will know what kind of accompaniment efficacious and pathetic music requires. And whoever says that such simplicity is not suitable for the stage, for my part, I think he has a corrupted taste.¹⁹

¹⁹G. B. Doni: Della Musica Scenica. In his Tratatti di musica, v. 2,

Further testimony to the difference between the performance of opera and secular song is found in Monteverdi's Eighth Book of Madrigals.²⁰ In addition to works in the madrigal tradition, this book contains the dramatic ballet Il Combattimento di Tancredo et Clorinda. The musical setting of the latter consists mainly of recitative, with instrumental sections for the ballet. In the original publication, Il Combattimento forms a separate part with its own preface. The preface specifies the instruments required as a quartet of members of the violin family, and "a contrabasso da gamba that continues with the harpsichord."²¹ As customary in a dramatic work intended for stage presentation, the bass-line instrument supports the harpsichord in vocal solos as well as in the instrumental music. The specific mention of the contrabasso indicates that its use was exceptional within the framework of a madrigal publication. When Monteverdi wants a contrabasso in a madrigal, he invariably notates it on a separate staff. Such parts are not continuous and serve an entirely different function from the doubling in Il Combattimento.

p. 111: "che ha sentito cantare Adriana al suono della sua medesima Arpa, avra potuto conoscere qual sorte di accompagnamenti richiede una Musica efficace, e patetica. E chi giudichera che questa semplicita non convenga alla scena, quanto a me io credo, che abbia il gusto corrotto."

²⁰ C. Monteverdi: Madrigali. Guerrieri, et Amorosì. Libro ottavo. Venice, Vincenti, 1638.

²¹ C. Monteverdi, Complete Works, vol. 8, p. 132: "Gli istrumenti, cio quattro viole da braccio, soprano, alto, tenore et basso, et contrabasso da gamba, che continuera con il clavicembalo . . ." It is improbable that Monteverdi means a real double bass. For more on this, see Chapter IX.

In Vago augeletto,²² for seven voices, two violins, basso continuo and contrabasso, the latter is used only for tutti effects, i. e., when all voices and instruments are playing. The sections for solo voice, or for few voices, are consistently accompanied by the basso continuo alone. The same situation is observed in Altri canti d'amor.²³ Chiamo d'oro,²⁴ calls for two voices and two violins in addition to the bass, which is marked spinetta. There is no reason to believe that this implies anything more than is said, namely that the bass is realized and played by the harpsichord alone. The basso ostinato should, according to the 20th-century understanding of such a work, be brought out, but, apparently, that was not the 17th-century view.

Monteverdi's markings in the seventh and the eighth books of madrigals clearly conform to the principles outlined above: in secular songs the basso continuo was performed by a chordal instrument alone, whereas in dramatic works a bass-line instrument, at least, was added.

The Cantata

Secular song in the early 17th century includes madrigals of various kinds, canzonette, recitatives, dances, etc. Around 1640 the cantata came into prominence and by 1680 it had almost completely replaced

²² Monteverdi, Complete Works, v. 8, p. 222.

²³ Monteverdi, Complete Works, v. 8, p. 2.

²⁴ Monteverdi, Complete Works, v. 7, p. 176.

earlier forms. Contrary to the practice in the forms it replaced the cantata accompaniment at the end of the 17th century may well have been performed with a bass-line instrument in addition to the harpsichord. The documentary material in support of this is very scanty. There are no surviving parts for a bass-line instrument, and the few pertinent statements in the literature suggest doubling only by inference. The case rests primarily on stylistic grounds, specifically, on changes that took place, around 1670, in the nature of the bass line in arias, and which seem to call for the presence of a bass-line instrument in cantata as well as in opera. These changes originated in opera, and it is therefore necessary to examine in some detail the development of opera arias.

A typical opera from around 1660 contains in the neighborhood of 50 to 60 arias. Generally speaking, the important material is concentrated in the vocal part and the bass has no melodic interest of its own. This is particularly true of the arias for voice and basso continuo, which make up about $\frac{4}{5}$ of the total. Not only is the melodic interest concentrated in the vocal part, but there is also almost a complete lack of ritornelli. The remaining $\frac{1}{5}$ of the arias feature some kind of orchestral participation. One or two might have a continuous string accompaniment throughout, but normally the orchestra plays only in the ritornelli. In the latter case the division between vocal and orchestral sections is very pronounced so there is hardly ever any overlap. Ritornelli are found at the beginning and the end of an aria, and frequently there are short orchestral passages in the middle as well. The first ritornello regularly features the same

opening phrase as does the voice, and in subsequent ones, a similar thematic relationship usually exist.

Around 1670 one can observe a pronounced tendency to make the bass line in basso continuo arias more important than had been the case earlier. This tendency manifests itself in the emergence of three new kinds of arias, which, however, all grow out of vocal forms of the immediate past. One of these seems to have originated in Venetian opera.²⁵ Its most conspicuous feature is the anticipation in the bass of the vocal theme. Furthermore, the lower part regularly contains thematic material at phrase endings, when the voice momentarily has a rest, and it often has longer solo passages with the character of internal ritornelli. In short, there is a striking similarity between what the bass does here and what the orchestra does in ritornello arias. It is as if the bass has taken over the ritornello function of the orchestra and the intention must have been to have the part stand out in a similar manner.

The second kind of aria is based on the ostinato idea and seems initially to have been associated with composers working in Rome and Naples. Ostinato arias are found in abundance at the beginning of the 17th century; they fade out of the picture in the 40's and 50's, only to have a resurgence in the 1670's, but in a somewhat different form. The older type features an inconspicuous bass pattern, frequently with even motion

²⁵ This statement is made with considerable hesitation for it is only an impression gained from looking through a large number of scores, and not a documented observation.

in the middle or lower bass range. The progressive type contains fast figuration and often moves into the tenor range. In either case, the voice features motives and themes of a contrasting nature. Both types are found in Alessandro Stradella's oratorio San Giovanni Battista,²⁶ as seen in Example VII-1. The difference between them is further underlined by indications in the original MS. In the older type, the bass is to be played by both first and second cello; one of the MSS calls for "all the basses of the concerto grosso," which presumably also included an arch-lute. The animated theme in Example VII-1b is marked "first cello," and its soloistic nature fully justifies such treatment.

Example VII:1. Ostinato patterns from A. Stradella's oratorio San Giovanni Battista.

a. Anco il cielo



b. Anco il sol



²⁶ Alessandro Stradella: San Giovanni Battista. First performed in Rome in 1675. There are two MSS in Bologna, Civico Museo Bibl. Musicale, BB/361 and BB/362. The latter is considerably more complete in its indications of use of instruments than the former.

In all these pieces the ostinato is used very freely. At the beginning, there are always two complete statements of the subject: a solo presentation in the bass, followed by its use as accompaniment for the first vocal phrase. After that, however, often the only thing left is a certain motivic consistency in the bass figuration. The composer apparently was not really concerned about the ostinato idea as such, but used it as a means to give each line a separate identity.

The third kind of aria is characterized by the voice and the basso continuo engaging in imitations, or in motivic interplay in which both parts share in the same material. The ancestry in this case is not entirely clear; the most likely candidate would seem to be the chamber cantata for two voices, also known under the name of "chamber duet". Large numbers of chamber duets up to Stradella's time, including many of his own works in this genre, are for soprano and bass voice, with basso continuo. The duets regularly featured an imitative texture, and if the bass voice were replaced by a cello the result would be much like the kind of aria under discussion. Such arias also seem to be of southern origin; an early example is Volin pure lontano from Stradella's San Giovanni Battista (Example VII-2). Here, as in the figural ostinato themes, the bass is marked "first cello" to make sure that the duet between the two lines is properly projected.

In the basso obbligato aria, as the new kind may be called,²⁷

²⁷ The expression "aria con basso obbligato" is used by Marcello in Il Teatro alla moda (ca. 1723), apparently about the type described above. Marcello facetiously complains that to the lazy modern composers it involves too much work to write such arias and that they are not in use any more.

Example VII:2. A. Stradella: Aria from S. Giovanni Battista.

Primo Violoncello

Volin pure lontano dal sen yolin pure lontano dal

sen quegl'af-fanni ch'opprimono il cor quegl'af-

fanni :/: ch'opprimono il cor etc.

the use of a bass-line instrument is a condition for a satisfactory performance. When such arias are transferred to the cantata it would seem justified to use a bass-line instrument there as well. Implicit support for this view is found in a cantata by Stradella, entitled Tante perle.²⁸ The aria Chi provo (Example VII-3), has, in addition to the basso continuo and the voice, a third part with a range from C to g'. If the usage in S. Giovanni Battista represents Stradella's preference for solo bass instrument it would appear that the part was intended for cello. Its most conspicuous element is the elaborate passage-work, which is fairly continuous and only broken when the voice part contains figuration. The basso continuo plays a simplified version, consisting of the harmonically active pitches shaped into continuous eight-note motion. There is thus a division of labour, but in principle, this is a basso obbligato aria in which the figuration, perhaps on account of the speed, has been given to the single-line bass instrument alone.²⁹ The presence of a third staff indicates the

²⁸ Venice, Biblioteca Nazionale Marciana, MS It. IV 463.9987.

²⁹ We are here witnessing the early stages of the development of the traditional obbligato aria. This type had not yet come into existence in Stradella's time. There are scattered examples of arias with trumpet or cornetto several decades back, but these instruments largely substitute for a string orchestra and play only the ritornelli. The first arias to approach the obbligato idea are thus those in which the bass becomes an independent and melodically significant line. "Chi provo" represents a second step in that the instrumental solo has been divorced from the basso continuo. This is a small step, and perhaps mostly a matter of notation; later theorists explain how the figuration in such cases is to be left out of the basso continuo. The step is nevertheless decisive in that it asserts the melodic independence of the solo instrument and the accompanimental function of the b.c. The final development, apparent after 1680, consists of the transfer of the obbligato to a higher register, allowing for the use of viola and violin, and ultimately also of woodwinds.

Example VII:3. A. Stradella: Aria from the cantata Tante perle.

Chi provo sdegnoso il fa- to adi- ra-

to non pietà crudel- tà non pietà crudel-

tà etc.

participation of a bass instrument in this one aria, but it is hard to believe that the added player sat idle throughout the rest of the cantata. Similarly, if a bass-line instrument was used throughout this particular cantata, it would seem that it also might have been used in the others in the same MS, particularly since most of the arias feature active bass lines. If so, the addition of a bass-line instrument may apply to cantatas in the new style in general.

Other arias with obbligato bass parts occur in a collection of cantatas by F. Gasparini, published in 1695. The purpose of the added part is explained in the preface:

To the music lovers: In some of the arias you will find two bass parts, one of which is for the ease of accompanying. It has to some extent been necessary to make adjustments for the sake of printing, and I have not been able totally to show my intentions. Where, however, there is a soprano or violin clef above the bass, that is played with the right hand, as if it were tablature. It will also suffice to use archlute and cello.³⁰

The specific mention of both a bass-line instrument and a chordal instrument indicates that such a combination was desirable. Gasparini leaves the impression that the archlute was second choice. The most common combination undoubtedly included the harpsichord and probably either the cello or the violone (the Italian bass gamba). In some of the arias there

³⁰ Gasparini, Francesco. Cantate da camera, a voce sola. Op. 1, Rome, Mascardi, 1695.

A gl'Amatori Della Musica: Trovarete in alcune Arie dui bassi uno per commodo, o facilita di accompagnare; essendo stato necessario anche accomodarse alla Stampa, che non ho potuto totalmente dismostrar la mia intenzione. Pero dove si trovano sopra il basso alcune chiavi di Canto, o Violino si soneranno con la mano destra in forma d'intavolatura Ivi potranno ancora sodisfarsi l'Arcileuto, e Violoncello.

are two bass parts, one printed right above the other. The upper line invariably contains fairly elaborate figuration and, as in Stradella's cantata, must have been intended for a single-line instrument. The lower part, included "for ease of accompanying", is derived from the other but all the fast figuration is taken out, leaving only the harmonically active notes.

Burney's comments on Scarlatti's cantatas touch upon the use of a cello:

The violoncello parts of many of these cantatas were so excellent that whoever was able to do them justice was thought a supernatural being. Geminiani used to relate that Francischelli, a celebrated performer on the violoncello at the beginning of this century, accompanied one of these cantatas at Rome so admirably, while Scarlatti was at the harpsichord, that the company being good Catholics and living in a country where miraculous powers have not yet ceased, were firmly persuaded it was not Francischelli who had played the violoncello, but an angel that had descended and assumed his shape.³¹

It seems reasonable to assume that by "violoncello part", Burney referred to the bass line in a basso obbligato aria.

Although it is clear that, at times, a supporting bass-line instrument was used in cantatas, it is equally certain that this was not an established practice. A few years after Gasparini's Opus I, a set of cantatas by Bernardo Gaffi appeared in print. Not only is the publisher the same, but the arias are similar in style, and even the preface is reminiscent of

³¹ Charles Burney. A General History of Music (London, 1776-1789) Vol. IV, p. 169.

Gasparini's down to the choice of words:³²

If one finds arias with two bass parts and the upper one with violin or tenor clef, one can use a violin or a violone. Lacking these, the ingenuity of a good harpsichord player may supply both, so the parts in violin clef are taken with the right hand, and the others with the left, the composer not intending to present cantatas with instruments, but only, for your greater edification and delight, to have the harpsichord play as if from tablature.

In contrast to Gasparini, here a bass-line instrument is specified to take care of the added part. When the violone is left out, however, the harpsichordist plays the part with his left hand. That does not mean that he plays two parts, because the basso continuo is only a simplified version of the other. Gaffi emphasizes that he is not writing "cantatas with instruments," and there is no reason to believe that the violone was to be used in any other instances than those specified.

It appears that at least some of the cantatas Handel wrote in Italy were performed without a bass-line instrument. During the period 1707-1710, he was occasionally employed by the Ruspoli family, and part of his duty was to write cantatas for their Sunday afternoon gatherings. The payment records show that cello and violone were added to the permanent

³² Gaffi, Bernardo. Cantate da camera a voce sola. Op. 1. Roma, Mascardi, 1700.

L'autore a gl'amatori della Musica. "Si troveranno alcune Arie con due Bassi, e quello di sopra con mutationi di chiave di Violino o Tenore, ivi potranno sodisfarsi il Violino o Violone & alla mancanza di questi potra supplire la virtu di un buon Sonatore di Cembalo con fare l'uno, & altro Basso, cioe la Chiave di Violino con la mano destra, e le altre con la sinistra, non havendo l'Autore intentione di presentarvi Cantate con Istromenti, ma solo di far suonare il Cembalo a uso d'Intavolatura, per vostro maggior studio e diletto."

ensemble in 1708.³³ Since no bass players were hired separately, it appears that the 21 cantatas performed in 1707 made use only of the harpsichord.³⁴ One of the cantatas from 1708, Mentre il tutto è in furore³⁵ contains an aria in which the bass features an ostinato pattern with fast repeated notes (Example VII-4). This kind of figuration is awkward to play on the keyboard but is idiomatic to a bowed instrument. No similar figuration is used in arias from 1707 and it is possible that Handel was writing the part with the newly appointed cellist in mind, and thus taking advantage of his presence.

Conclusion

During the first three-fourths of the 17th century one chordal instrument alone would suffice for the basso continuo in secular song. During the last quarter of the century it appears that a bass-line instrument at times may have been added to the chordal instrument. This was a result of a stylistic change in secular cantatas which gave the bass much greater melodic importance than had been the case earlier. The evidence for the use of a bass-line instrument, other than stylistic considerations, is, however, not conclusive. It therefore seems that even if bass-line doubling at times must have taken place it did not, by 1700, have the force of a common practice.

³³ Ursula Kirkendale: "The Ruspoli Documents on Handel." In Journal of the American Musicological Society, vol. 20 (1967), p. 228ff.

³⁴ For a list of these cantatas, see Kirkendale, op. cit., p. 271-272.

³⁵ In Chrysander's edition of Handel's Complete Works, vol. 50, p. 147.

Example VII:4. G. F. Handel: Aria from the cantata *Mentre il tutto è in furore.*

The musical score is presented in five systems, each with a vocal line (treble clef) and a basso continuo line (bass clef). The lyrics are written below the vocal line.

System 1:
 Vocal: *Com.bat.ti, e poi ri -*
 Continuo: *Com.bat.ti, e poi ri -*

System 2:
 Vocal: *tor. na a in. na - mo. ra. re il cor, com. bat. ti, e poi ri - tor. na, e poi ri - tor. na - a in -*
 Continuo: *tor. na a in. na - mo. ra. re il cor, com. bat. ti, e poi ri - tor. na, e poi ri - tor. na - a in -*

System 3:
 Vocal: *na - mo. ra. re il cor, com. bat. ti, com. bat. ti, e poi ri. tor. na a in. na - mo. ra. re il*
 Continuo: *na - mo. ra. re il cor, com. bat. ti, com. bat. ti, e poi ri. tor. na a in. na - mo. ra. re il*

System 4:
 Vocal: *cor. e poi ri - tor - - na, com. bat. ti, e poi ri - tor. na a in. na - mo. ra. re il*
 Continuo: *cor. e poi ri - tor - - na, com. bat. ti, e poi ri - tor. na a in. na - mo. ra. re il*

System 5:
 Vocal: *cor. a in. na - mo. ra. re il cor.*
 Continuo: *cor. a in. na - mo. ra. re il cor.*
 (Fin.)

CHAPTER VIII SACRED VOCAL MUSIC II

The previous chapter on sacred vocal music dealt only with choral polyphony and with works in the monodic style before 1650. Here the discussion of monodic works will be continued, and the development of choral music with instruments will be traced from the beginning of the century till the end.

Concerted Choral Works with Instruments

Concerted choral works with instruments are among the least known but historically most important sacred works of the 17th century. This attractive repertory, which provides a link between the concerted sacred music of the late 16th century and the instrumental concerto, is worthy of a full-scale study. Only certain aspects are touched upon on the following pages, since the main concern, of course, is the basso continuo practice.

Among the polychoral works of Giovanni Gabrieli are some that feature elaborate interplay of voices and instruments. The motet In ecclesiis¹ employs two choirs and an instrumental group consisting of cornetti, trombones, and one violin. The first choir often features rapid

¹ W. Apel and A. T. Davidson: Historical Anthology of Music. Harvard University Press, Cambridge, 1949, vol. I, p. 175. The piece first appeared in the posthumous second book of the Sacrae symphoniae (1615).

diminutions or long passages for one voice alone and was therefore very likely made up of solo voices. The second choir feature mostly massive chordal statements and undoubtedly was performed with many singers on each part.

The majority of polychoral works from the early decades of the 17th century fails to specify what kinds of performance groups were needed. The conductor was given considerable latitude so that, for instance, the term coro may be interpreted to mean either an instrumental or a vocal choir. Nevertheless, it is also evident that the basic performing forces used by Gabrieli -- solo voices, chorus, and an instrumental group -- continued to be favoured. This can clearly be seen in a work by L. Gallerano published in 1629, entitled "Concerted Masses and Psalms in Three, Five, and Eight Parts to Which is Added an Optional Third Choir".² There are altogether 13 printed parts: five for the first choir (C. A. T. B. Q.), three for the second choir (C. A. B.), four for the third choir (S. A. T. B.), and a basso per l'organo. The function of the different choirs, may be gleaned from the preface in which the correct performance of each piece in the collection is described. The first choir consists of five solo voices; the second choir of two violins and chitarrone or another similar instrument. The optional third choir functions as ripieno, i. e., it doubles

² Leandro Gallerano di Brescia; Messa e Salmi concertati a tre, cinque, et otto voci aggiuntovi il Terzo Choro ad libitum. Opus 16. Venice, Vincenti, 1629. There are twelve parts for the different choirs and a basso per l'organo. At the Civico Museo Bibliografia Musicale in Bologna the copy of the first edition is incomplete and the information about the parts is based on the reprint from 1641.

the parts of the first choir in such a way that certain sections of a piece are performed by all the voices together in a tutti effect. The parts of the third choir may be doubled by voices and instruments, evidently to give the tutti as powerful a sound as possible.

The kind of combination featured by Gallerano eventually came to be widely used by other composers, particularly after the middle of the century. Some latitude existed as to the exact number of parts in each group but the basic components are always the same: a choir consisting of solo voices, another choir used for ripieno, and a third choir of two violins and often, but far from always, some bass-line instrument.

As in other sacred vocal music from the first half of the 17th century, there are no signs that the basso continuo in Gallerano's work should be doubled. The instrumental bass, i. e., the archlute, is part of the second choir and therefore plays only when this group participates. A similar situation was encountered in Cavalli's Musiche Sacre (1656) discussed in Chapter I, and it was then observed that if the composer had been so inclined it would have been easy, and inexpensive, to have made the instrumental bass duplicate the basso continuo all the time. It is evident, that such doubling was not desired. It is also evident, however, that later composers took a different view on this matter. One of the earliest indications of change is the inclusion in a collection of masses and psalms by Cazzati³ of an optional violone part that doubles the basso

³ M. Cazzati: Messa, e Salmi a Quattro Voci con due violini obbligati, e quattro parti di Ripieno a beneplacito, con altri Salmi a due, e tre Voci. Op. 37. Bologna, Silvani, 1666.

continuo. Similar parts are found in other works by Cazzati and also turn up with increasing frequency in the works of other composers. Not all concerted works contain an instrumental bass, but when, towards the end of the century, a bass part is included it always doubles the basso continuo.

The doubling of the bass line seems to have been practiced particularly in large scale works. Indicative in this respect is a statement by Zaccharia Tevo in which he discusses the participation of instruments in choral works:

Concerning the instruments, which one uses, violins, cornetti, and trumpets play the highest parts. The violas play the alto and tenor parts; the bass part is played by viola da gambas, cellos [?], bassoons, and trombones; the violoni and theorbos play the basso continuo. With these voices [i. e., a normal four-part choir] and with these instruments one performs large-scale works, such as psalms and masses.⁴

It appears that in works of this magnitude both violoni and theorbos were used to double the basso continuo. It is quite rare to find anything even approaching the size of Tevo's ensemble in publications, but apparently such groups were brought together for special celebrations. At San Petronio in Bologna the feast of the Patron Saint was celebrated each year with, among other things, a magnificent musical performance for which

⁴ Zaccharia Tevo: Il musico testore. Venice, Bortoli, 1705, p. 360: "Circa poi gl'Istrumenti, che si usano, sono li Violini, li Cornetti, e le Trombe, che suonano le parti sopra acute. Le Viole da braccio, che suonano le parti dell' Alto, e Tenore, le Viole da gamba, e da spalla, li Fagotti, e Tromboni, che suonano la parte del Basso, e li Violoni, e Tiorbe che suonano il Basso continuo. Con queste voci, adunque, e con questi Istrumenti, si formano le compositioni grosse, come Salmi, e Messe . . ."

a large number of performers was hired.⁵ Payment records from these events show a marked concentration of bass instruments. Moreover, when playing parts are preserved the violone and the theorbo both commonly double the basso continuo.⁶

Sacred Solos after 1650

Sacred music for solo voice, or voices, during the second half of the 17th century appeared in a variety of forms, but common to them all was the presence of arias. The musical style in the arias is the same as in those found in operas and oratorios. Since the basso continuo in these genres was reinforced by a bass-line instrument it would seem logical that a similar practice existed in sacred music. That, however, was not the case. This point is well demonstrated in Z. Tevo's Il musico testore. When discussing how to write sacred solos Tevo observes that

. . . the basso continuo should play something florid, or simply repeat the vocal theme, or present a new idea that later will be sung. A particularly beautiful effect is achieved if the organ sometimes introduces the subject and also repeats it after it has been sung, something which in addition gives the singer a rest. One should, however, use such means with discretion and for a short time, because it is not good to hear the organ alone . . .⁷

⁵See Anne Schnobelen: "Performance practices at San Petronio in the Baroque". In Acta Musicologica, vol. 41 (1969), pp. 37-55.

⁶A. Schnobelen, op. cit., p. 44.

⁷Z. Tevo, Il musico testore, p. 286: ". . . dovrà il Basso continuo sonare qualche galanteria fioreggiate, ò pure replicare l'inventione cantata, o formare nova aria, che si dovrà cantare, onde stara bene e sara vago sentire se l'Organo farà tal volta il soggetto che si dovrà cantare, & anche replicarlo dopo cantato, e che servirà anche di riposo al cantore, ma si usera questo modo per poco tempo, e con discretione perche non fa bel sentire l'organo solo. . ."

Since the subject discussed is composition, the passage presumably refers to the continuo line itself and not to the realization. The continuo line may contain melodic material, and it is specifically stated that the organ introduces this material. This would seem to exclude the participation of a bass-line instrument. The final warning against letting the organ be heard too much by itself also implies that no other instrument normally would be playing. Altogether it seems evident that Tevo thought of the organ as the only instrument that played the bass part in sacred solos in which there is only a continuo accompaniment.

In another place Tevo deals with the use of instruments and solo voices together:

. . . when a piece for solo voice is accompanied by instruments, one takes as many as the composer wants, that is to say two violins alone, two violins and a bowed bass instrument, or all the instruments just mentioned . . .⁸

The "instruments just mentioned" are those cited above in connection with concerted works: violins, cornetti, trumpets, violas, cellos, etc.. With such a large ensemble the basso continuo was always doubled by a theorbo and a violone. With only two violins, however, no bass instrument was needed although it may be included by the composer.

The validity of Tevo's remarks is borne out in the surviving music from the time. Works for solo voice, or voices, whether printed or in MS

⁸ Z. Tevo: Il musico testore, p. 362: ". . . che accompagnandosi la compositione a voce sola con gl'istrumenti, se ne piglierà quanti piacerà al Compositore, come a dire due Violini soli, due violini, & una viola bassa, o pure tutti li poco fà nominati instrumenti . . ."

have only one single basso continuo part. Works with obligato instruments or orchestral accompaniment, on the other hand, more frequently have the basso continuo line doubled. P. Albergati's "Motets and Antiphons," opus 7,⁹ has a five part string orchestra and the basso continuo is doubled by both cello and theorbo. A similar doubling is found in some of G. A. Perti's sacred cantatas but not with any consistency: of a group of 19 cantatas only two have parts for a bass-line instrument.¹⁰ The same situation can be observed in works by other composers. There are scattered examples of bass-line doubling, particularly in works with orchestra, but in the large majority the only bass part is the basso continuo.

Bass-line doubling in sacred solos seems to have been practiced along the same lines as in concerted works: the inclusion of a bass instrument depends primarily on the size of the instrumental group. With a large orchestra several instruments may be used to strengthen the bass; with a small group a bass-line instrument may not be needed at all. In either case the question of doubling was decided, not by the performer, but by the composer himself.

⁹ Pirro Albergati: Motetti et Antifone. A voce sola con strumenti. Op. 7. Bologna, Micheletti, 1691.

¹⁰ MS. P. XLV at San Petronio in Bologna. It may be argued that the performance-material is incomplete; it would, however, be a curious coincidence if practically all the bass parts were lost while most of the other parts appear to be preserved.

CHAPTER IX THE BOWED BASS INSTRUMENTS

The terminology of 17th-century string instruments is a source of considerable uncertainty and confusion. The meaning of a term often changes over the years, and from one country to another as well. This is particularly true of those referring to bowed bass instruments, such as violone, viola (without a qualifying da gamba or da braccio), and contrabasso. Adhering to present notions of 17th century string terminology one would, for example, quite frequently choose a double bass when the instrument called for is a bass gamba or a cello. With such misconceptions at hand a review of the matter is clearly needed.

The Violone

It is generally thought that violone is a 17th and 18th-century term for a double bass viol and that the instrument was tuned one octave below the bass viol, resulting in the pitches DD - GG - C - E - A - d. As a member of the viol family it would have had at most nine frets so the highest note was b. In music from the time, however, this b is regularly exceeded by as much as a fourth, and it has been suggested that the term violone must refer to some instrument other than the

double bass.¹ This is indeed the case. In order to explain how this came about one must turn to the history of the viol family, which in Italy differs markedly from other European countries.

A new perspective results from a simple fact of 16th century terminology: the word violone is synonymous with viola de gamba. Almost 50 years have elapsed since documentary material to this effect was first published, but it has only recently entered the columns of musical reference works.² The term violone is used by a number highly regarded theorists, such as G. M Lanfranco, S. Ganassi and Diego Ortiz.³ Of these, Ganassi and Ortiz address themselves specifically to the playing of the viola da gamba. The word violone is freely used in the texts, and even appears in the titles. Ganassi's second book is entitled Lettonne seconda pur della prattica di sonare il Violone

¹ See Sir John Hawkins, A General History of the Science and Practice of Music (1776), reprint by Dover, New York, 1963, footnote on p. 603 about the violone. Hawkins mentions that in England the term "double bass" is used, and continues: . . . "it seems that this appellation [i. e. violone] was formerly given to that instrument which we now call the violoncello". For a more recent example, see W. S. Newman, The Sonata in the Baroque Era, p. 55.

² The material was first published in an article by E. Albinetti entitled, "La viola da gamba in Italia," Rivista Musicale Italiana, vol. 28 (1921), p. 88ff. See Sibyl Marcuse, Musical Instruments, Garden City, N. Y., 1964, "Violone".

³ Giovan Maria Lanfranco: Scintille di Musica. Brescia, Britannico, 1532. Silvestro Ganassi: Regola Rubertina, Venice, printed for the author, 1542. Diego Ortiz: Il primo libro di Diego Ortiz, Nel quale si tratta delle Glose sopra le Cadenze & altre sorte di punti in la Musica del Violone. Rome, Dorica, 1553.

d'arco,⁴ and the word is found in the rather lengthy title of Ortiz' treatise as well. All three writers describe a viol consort as consisting of three different-sized instruments, each having six strings tuned in fourths with a third in the middle. The bass viol is tuned D - G - c - e - a - d', and the soprano one octave higher. There is some disagreement about the alto-tenor variety; Lanfranco says the lowest string is A, whereas Ganassi gives G.

The use of violone as a generic term is still encountered at the beginning of the 17th century, for example in the Compendio della Musica (1606) by G. F. Prandi.⁵ This MS treatise contains a fingering chart preceded by the words Noti da far'ne' Violoni. "Notes that can be played on the viols"⁶ The chart (Example IX-1) is designed to include all three members of the viol family, and space is provided for the bass, the tenor, and the soprano. For each instrument there are two staves, one with six lines for the tablature, and, above, another with five lines for the transcription to regular musical notation.⁷ The chart

⁴ Sylvestro Ganassi: Letitione seconda pur della prattica di sonare il Violone d'arco. Venice, 1543.

⁵ Giovanni Francesco Prandi: Compendio della Musica. Bologna, Civico Museo Bibliografia Musicale, MS E/19.

⁶ Prandi, fol. 53 v;

⁷ The lay-out is similar to contemporary Italian keyboard scores in that the bass system in these also contains six staff-lines. Such a keyboard score was called an intavolatura, and the obvious similarity to viol tablatures of the kind used by Prandi suggests how this curious terminology might have come into being.

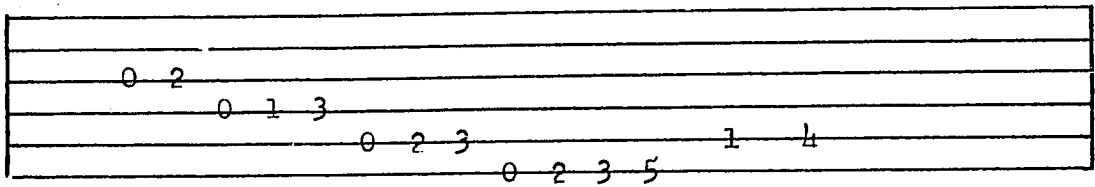
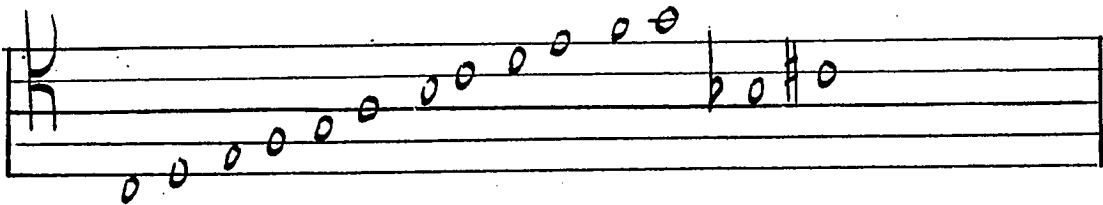
Example IX:1. Table of violone tunings from G. F. Prandi, Compendio della Musica (1606), fol 53v.

Noti da far' ne' Violni

del Basso

(Here the MS contains two staff-lines, one with five and the other with six lines, as below, intended to show the notes that can be played on the bass, but never filled in.)

Tenori



Soprano

(Two more staves, as above, that are not filled in)

is incomplete; only the fingerings of the tenor viol are given.

Prandi's is the only 17th-century treatise to maintain the old terminology, but there are references of various kinds indicating that a violone could be something else than a bass instrument. Agazzari, in Del sonare sopra il basso, while discussing the use of the violone as an ornamenting instrument, finds it necessary to stress that he is talking about its use on the bass part: "The violone (when) on the lowest part, proceeds gravely . . ."⁸ In the same paragraph Agazzari mentions a number of other instruments but not the specific parts they play, and yet makes a point of it with the violone. It is unlikely that the bass gamba was used on any other part than the bass; a tenor part would have been played by an instrument of appropriate size, in other words by a tenor gamba. Agazzari's comment apparently was intended to clarify which member of the violone family he was talking about, and by mentioning the bass part, he specifies which size of instrument he had in mind.

An example similar to Agazzari's is found in a work by S. d'India, published in 1621.⁹ According to the preface, the instrumental accompaniment at the first performance consisted of violin, theorbo, harpsichord and basso di violone. The implications of the latter

⁸"Il violone come parte grave procede gravemente" . . . Italian text in Kinkeldey, Orgel und Klavier, p. 219.

⁹Sigismondo d'India: Le Musiche e balli a quattro, Venice, Vincenti, 1621.

expression is that the violone comes in several sizes, and that it was necessary to say which one was used. D'India's usage is, however, exceptional for the time, and after 1620 the term violone by itself, without any modifier attached, had become associated with one specific size of instrument.

One of the interesting things about Prandi's fingering chart is the implication that the range of the respective members of the viol family has been shifted down about one fifth. Prandi's fingerings for the tenor viol only go down to the third string, which is c. By adding two other strings below, each at the distance of a fourth, one arrives at D - G - c - e - a - d'. This is the same tuning that earlier theorists gave to the bass viol, but here it applies to the tenor. Accordingly, the bass viol should now extend down to GG, and the soprano to G. Confirmation of this state of affairs is found in nearly all the major theorists from the time whose writings have a bearing on Italian practices. It is first mentioned by Zacconi in 1595, then by Banchieri (1609), Cerone (1612), and by Praetorius (1619).¹⁰ The picture that

¹⁰ Lodovico Zacconi: Prattica Musica. Venetia, Carampello, 1596, first edition 1592, Libro quarto, cap. 56.
 Adriano Banchieri: Conclusioni dell suono del Organo, Bologna, Rossi, 1609, p. 53-54.
 Pedro Cerone: El Melopeo y Maestro. Naples, Gargano y Nucci, 1612, p. 1058-1059. (Del modo de templar el Violon o la vihuela de arco).
 Michael Praetorius: Syntagma Musicum, vol. II, De Organographia, Wolffenbüttel, Holwein, 1619, p. 44 and tuning chart, p. 25.

emerges indicates that between Ortiz (1553) and Zacconi (1592) the tuning of each member of the Italian viol family was moved a fifth down. The change apparently only affected Italy and Germany, so that in other countries the practice of Ganassi and Ortiz remained until the viol went out of use.

The earliest of the theorists mentioned, Zacconi, seems to have settled on the term viola da gamba and does not use violone at all. Cerone, writing in Spanish, talks about "violon" as well as "vihuela," indicating that the Italian equivalents, violone and viola possibly may have been current in Spanish influenced Naples, where his book was published. The most intriguing use of terms, however, is that of Banchieri, in that he suggests a distinction in meaning between the two words. The two upper instruments in a consort are referred to as viols, respectively viola in soprano and viola mezzana da gamba. The bass is called Violone da gamba - Prima Viola del concerto. The latter expression, "first viol of the consort," is a result of Banchieri's calling the bass in any family of instruments "the first," the tenor "second," and so on. The meaning of the qualifying sentence is therefore merely to indicate that the violone da gamba is the regular consort bass. In this particular case it serves to distinguish the bass from another instrument that goes under a similar name, and that is the violone in contrabasso. The latter is a real double bass, tuned DD GG - C - E - A - d. Banchieri does not assign any number to

the contrabasso, thereby indicating that it is not a regular member of the consort. A normal bass part would be played by the violone da gamba, and the contrabasso would presumably have some other function, such as adding weight to the bass.

The violone came to be the dominating bass instrument of the 17th century. It is used in vocal and instrumental works for the church as well as in dance music and chamber sonatas. Judging from title pages, the only other bass instrument that approached it in popularity was the archlute. An examination of the music in which the violone is specified indicates that the instrument called for is Banchieri's violone da gamba rather than the violone in contrabasso. The range of Banchieri's consort bass, assuming that it had nine frets, is from GG to e'. This accommodates a normal violone part.¹¹ The top note is a fourth higher than the contrabasso can go. It is possible to argue that the double bass as a matter of course would play the part one octave lower than notated. Because of the nature of the music, however, such a solution is at best unlikely. A representative passage from the repertory in question is the excerpt from M. Cazzati's sonata La Casala in Example IX-2. The fast motion would become indistinct so that the interplay between the upper and lower parts practically would be lost. Furthermore, the driving rhythmic quality

¹¹ Johann Walther, in his *Musikalisches Lexikon* (1732) still gives the range of the violone as GG to e'.

Example IX:2. Excerpt from the opening movement of Cazzati's sonata La Casala (opus. 35).

Violin I

Violin II

Violone

Organo
Tiorba
Contrabasso

The musical score is presented in three systems. The first system contains four staves: Violin I (treble clef), Violin II (treble clef), Violone (bass clef), and a combined staff for Organo, Tiorba, and Contrabasso (bass clef). The second system contains five staves: Violin I, Violin II, Violone, and two staves for the lower instruments. The third system also contains five staves: Violin I, Violin II, Violone, and two staves for the lower instruments. The notation includes various rhythmic values, accidentals, and dynamic markings such as 'p' and 'f'.

From W. Klenz: G. B. Bononcini of Modena, Durham, Duke University Press, 1962. Copied by permission.

of the eight-notes would also be adversely affected. In this particular case there is moreover a distinction between the contrabasso, which may support the static basso continuo, and the fast moving violone, which plays the contrapuntal bass part, indicating that these are two different kinds of instruments.

The violone does not appear to have been used as a solo instrument, but there is one piece, apparently unique, by the Modenese composer G. Colombi (ca. 1635-1694), entitled Toccatà a Violone solo.¹² It is extremely long, covering 40 pages on large octavo size paper, and at that it is unfinished! The range is from BB, which is used sparingly, to e', which occurs with some frequency. There is a great deal of fast motion, and there can be no doubt that it was intended to sound as written -- not to mention that all notes lower than D could not have been played down an octave anyway, for they exceed the lower range of the double bass.

No 17th-century theorist actually states that the violone is the same instrument as the Italian bass viol, but there is at least one passage in the numerous writings of G. B. Doni that implies this. It occurs when he describes an instrument he has had made, a violone panharmonico¹³ as he calls it, which is capable of playing in tune in all the

¹² Giuseppe Colombi: Toccatà a Violone solo. MS in Modena, Biblioteca Estense, MS Mus F. 286.

¹³ Giovanni Battista Doni: Annotazioni sopra il Compendio de' Generi, e de' Modi della Musica, Roma, Fei, 1640, p. 314-315.

modes. In itself, the violone panharmonico is an experimental instrument with little practical value. In the process of describing his invention, however, Doni compares it to a regular violone; he also gives accurate measurements of the new instrument. If his statement falls somewhat short of an exact description of the regular violone, it gives a good idea of its size. His description goes as follows:

Now because this kind of violone by us primarily was designed to accompany the basso continuo and for use in the theater, for which it is eminently well suited, we made it of considerable size so that it may be heard in a large hall, full of people, and not remain overpowered by one of these large archicembali with many stops. This violone can even rest on the floor while one is playing, without having to keep it up from the floor with the legs. (The size of) those that we have made are seven palmi and one dito, Roman measure, from the end of the body to the ciglietto, of which four and one dito is the length of the body, the rest is the neck.¹⁴

One Roman palmio equals 22.43 centimeters, and one dito is one twelfth of one palmio. The body of Doni's violone measures four palmi and one dito, the equivalent of which is 91.6 centimeters. In the following table, the size of the violone panharmonico is compared to that of other

¹⁴"Or perche tal sorte di Violone era da noi destinata principalment per l'accompagnamento de' Bassi continui, & per uso delle Scene, dove mirabilmente conviene, l'habbiamo fatto di notabil grandezza accio si senta in una Sala grande, & piena di gente, & non resti offuscato da uno di questi Archicembali di forma grande, e di molti Registri; e si possa anco posare in terra mentre si suona, senza averlo a tenerlo sollevato con le gambe. Quelli dunque, che abbiamo fatti fare sono di palmi sette, e un dito, misura di Roma, da fondo del corpo fino al ciglietto; de quali, quattro e un dito, ne occupa la lunghezza del corpo; e il restante il Manico."

bass and double bass instruments.¹⁵

TABLE II. Body sizes of bass string instruments.

Bass Viol (Italian tenor), lowest string D	68.0 cm
Cello	74.0 - 76.0 cm
Praetorius' bass viol (Klein Bass da gamba)	78.5 - 82.5 cm
Doni's <u>Violone panharmonico</u>	91.6 cm
Modern double bass	112.0 cm
Praetorius' <u>violone (contrabasso da gamba)</u>	114.0 cm

Doni's instrument is clearly larger than what normally goes under the name of a bass gamba, which measures around 68 cm, and it is clearly smaller than the double bass. The closest comparison is Praetorius' bass viol, which is the same instrument that Banchieri calls violone da gamba. The difference between Praetorius' bass viol and Doni's instrument is about ten centimeters (about four inches). Doni indicates that his violone panharmonico is so large that it can be supported directly on the floor, implying that this cannot be done with a regular violone. The size of the latter would therefore be roughly that mentioned by Praetorius. Doni's statement thus confirms that in Italy, the term violone is used for the bass viol, with a range of GG to e'.

Final confirmation that the term violone was used to designate a bass rather than a double bass instrument is found in payment records

¹⁵ The estimate of the sizes of instruments described by Praetorius are taken from N. Bessaraboff, Ancient European Musical Instruments, Boston, Harvard University Press, 1941, p. 361. The estimates of average body measurements are taken from Bessaraboff and from Marcuse's Musical Instruments.

from the early 18th century, as for instance those of the Ottoboni court in Rome.¹⁶ In these records the performers are listed according to the instrument they played, so there are separate entries for each of the four members of the string group. The two lower varieties are mentioned respectively as violoni and contrabassi. The same practice was followed at the Ruspoli household.¹⁷ It is evident that the double bass has a specific name of its own, namely contrabasso, and that the regular bass is referred to as violone.

If there is a clear distinction between bass and double bass instruments, the same cannot be said about the cello and the violone. In the Ottoboni records there is a change in the entries shortly after 1720.¹⁸ In the place of the word violone, now appears violoncello. As the same musicians continue to be mentioned after the change, there is little likelihood that a new instrument all of a sudden had taken over. It is rather the book-keeping procedure, started at the time when the violone prevailed, that is changed to take into account the predominance of the cello. It indicates that prior to the change, there must have been a

¹⁶ See Sven H. Hansell: "Orchestral Practice at the Court of Cardinal Pietro Ottoboni," Journal of the American Musicological Society, vol. 19 (1966), pp. 398-403.

¹⁷ This is documented in two different publications by Ursula Kirkendale: Antonio Caldara, Cologne, Boehlhaus, 1966, p. 360ff, and "The Ruspoli Documents on Handel," Journal of the American Musicological Society, vol. 20 (1967), p. 256.

¹⁸ Hansell, "Orchestral Practice," p. 399.

period in which both cellos and violoni were used on the bass part, but only the latter term was employed. The dual meaning was evidently widely known because it is incorporated into the 1729 edition of the prestigious Italian language dictionary Vocabulario degli Accademici della Crusca:

Violone. A low pitched, large viol, which also is called "bass viol," and, when of smaller size, violoncello.¹⁹

The definition confirms what is generally known: the violone is a bass viol, longer than the cello. However, it also clearly states that a cello also may be classed as a violone.

The double meaning of the word violone throws a new perspective on instrumental usage and it is of considerable interest to see how far back it applies. Very important documents in this connection are G. B. Vitali's opus 1, 2, 3 and 4, in which he is presented as Musico di Violone da Brazzo.²⁰ Vitali's position is always mentioned after the title, as in his op. 2. It is known that Vitali was a cellist, so there can be little doubt about the meaning of the expression violone da brazzo.

Vitali's usage of the word violone is rare, but not unique. In

¹⁹ Vocabulario degli Accademici della Crusca, 4th edition. Florence, Manni, 1729, vol. V, p. 281: "Violone. Viola grande di tuono grave, che si dice anche Basso di Viola, e Violoncello, quando e di minor grandezza."

²⁰ Sonata a due Violini. Col suo Basso continuo per l'Organo. Di Giovanni Battista Vitali. Musico di Violone da Brazzo in S. Petronio di Bologna, & Academico Filaschise. Op. 2. Bologna, Monti, 1667.

Kircher's Musurgia universalis (1650), there is a drawing of a cello with the caption "violone."²¹ Under normal circumstances this might be taken as another of Kircher's mistakes, but with the above information in mind, it is quite possible that he is here correct.

Even if the same term is used for two different instruments, it is not to be assumed that the cello was used as widely as the violone, at least not before the early decades of the 18th century. When a bowed bass instrument is called for in 17th-century publications, the normal term used is violone. Not only that, but the range of the part rarely goes beyond that of the Italian bass gamba, GG to e'. Cello parts, on the other hand, such as those found in certain types of arias, commonly go up to g'. It is thus clear that the composers, apart from special effects through exploring the high register of the cello, took pains to make bass parts playable on the violone, presumably because the latter was more readily available. There would, however, hardly have been any objection to using a cello.

The etymology of the word violoncello has always been a mystery, but with the insights gained above the question appears in a new light. Early in the 17th century the dominating bass instrument was the Italian bass gamba, which commonly was referred to as the violone, literally, a "big viol." Its counterpart in the violin family at this time

²¹ Athanasius Kircher: Musurgia universalis, Roma, Corbeletti, 1650, vol. I, plate facing p. 486.

had no specific name except one that indicates its function within the family: basso di viola da braccio. Because it also is a "big viol," and because its function was the same as that of the violone, the latter term came to be applied to both instruments. This usage is demonstrated by Kircher and Vitali. To distinguish between the two, a diminutive came to be applied when used about the arm-viol variety, so that around 1640 one finds the expression "violoncino"²² literally "a small, big viol." By 1680 this term is replaced by another with essentially the same meaning, "violoncello," which of course is still in use, though normally (and nonsensically) abbreviated to "cello" in English.

Some of the confusion about the meaning of the word violone can be attributed to misinformation provided by Filippo Bonanni in his Gabinetto Armonico, a pictorial survey of musical instruments published in Italy around 1720.²³ Plate 57 shows a picture with the caption violone, which is represented as a fretted instrument, the size of a double bass. Bonanni's work is notorious for being unreliable, and this picture is no exception in that it shows six pegs but only four strings. The description, however, correctly describes the instrument as having

²² The first known use of this term is in the title of a work by G. B. Fontana, Sonate a 1. 2. 3. per il violino, o Cornetto, Fagotto, Chitarone, Violoncino o simile altro Istromento, Venice, Magni, 1641.

²³ Filippo Bonanni: Gabinetto Armonico. Roma, Placho, 1723. First published in 1716, and enlarged for the second edition in 1723. Reprint with the original illustrations, but with new captions, ed. by F. L. Harrison and J. Rimmer, New York, Dover, 1964.

six strings, and the general language indicates that Bonanni had the right instrument in mind.

The source of confusion about the violone is the fact that this term actually was used of the double bass, at first in Germany during the 17th century, and eventually, after the middle of the 18th century, also in Italy. In Germany this usage of the term violone can be traced back to Praetorius. He employs it for one instrument only, and that is the double bass viol - the contrabasso da gamba - which has a downwards range to DD. As noted above, Banchieri refers to the double bass viol in a similar manner, but unlike him, Praetorius does not mention the term violone in connection with the Italian bass gamba. This may reflect established German usage, or it may be a result of the fluid state of terminology at the time. Whatever the reason, it is evident that Praetorius' usage still is current towards the end of the century. It is reflected in the writings of G. Muffat, who remarks that what the Italians call contrabasso, in Germany goes under the name of violone.²⁴

The idea that the violone was a double bass also turns up in France, and it is mentioned by no less an authority than Sebastian Brossard in his dictionary.²⁵ Brossard declares that the double bass

²⁴ Cooper, K. and J. Zsako: "G. Muffat's Observations on the Lully Style of Performance," Musical Quarterly, vol. 53 (1967), p. 233.

²⁵ Sebastian de Brossard: Dictionnaire de Musique, Paris, Ballard, 1703. "Violone."

is not found in France, and he himself evidently has only passing knowledge of its use. This raises the question where his information originated. It would seem that Brossard's statement came as a result of his knowledge of German rather than Italian usage.

Sometime in the early 18th century the German use of the term violone changes so as to conform to the Italian. Johann Walther, in his Musikalisches Lexikon describes the instrument as having six strings and a range from GG to d' or e'.²⁶ Walther had an intimate knowledge of Praetorius' Syntagma, and in many articles he makes references to this work. In the case of the violone, however, he does not refer to Praetorius at all, nor, for that matter, to Brossard, whom he also frequently quotes. Walther, in this case, relies on his own knowledge of the instrument from the way it is being used in Germany. Walther is seconded a few years later by Johann Philippe Eisel,²⁷ and one must assume that their view represented German usage at the time.

Eventually the word violone came to refer to a double bass also in Italy. The outline of this development is not at all clear, but there are clues in the terminology in Northern Italy. At San Petronio in

²⁶ Johann Walther: Musikalisches Lexikon, (1732), facsimile, edited by R. Schaal, Kassel, Baerenreiter, 1953, "Violone."

²⁷ Johann Philippe Eisel: Musicus autodidaktos, Erfurt, 1738. Quoted under "violone" by Sibyl Marcuse in Musical Instruments.

Bologna it is very rare to find orchestral parts with the indication contrabasso, even in the 18th century. The payment records from the period 1680 to 1750 indicate that most of the time there was one cellist and one violonist in the permanent orchestra.²⁸ This is also reflected in the orchestral parts, which are marked either cello or violone. The parts for these instruments are generally the same, but there are also quite a few instances in which certain portions of a violone part will be transposed down one octave. Two conclusions can be drawn from this. First, the violone part is normally notated at pitch, and only when the composer or arranger desired a lower bass were specific portions written into the part one octave lower. Secondly, it does show that the violone at times carried out a function similar to that of the double bass. By 1750, the double bass had been a standard item in many orchestras for a long time, and knowledge of the practice was certainly spread everywhere. Since the violone has the range to function as a double bass in the vast majority of cases, it would seem natural that it would take over this role in places where the regular double bass was not available. That included San Petronio in 1750, and also San Marco in Venice as late as 1766.²⁹

²⁸This information was kindly supplied by S. Paganelli, librarian at San Petronio, and at the Civico Museo Bibliografia Musicale in Bologna.

²⁹See D. Arnold, "Orchestras in Eighteenth-Century Venice," Galpin Society Journal, vol. 9 (1966) p. 9.

The term "viola"

In the early part of the 17th century, the word viola was used, without further qualification, for members of the family of viols as well as the family of violins. It is now often assumed that later in the century, viola refers to a viol, or to the alto violin. This is nearly the reverse of the actual situation in Italy. During the early decades of the 17th century, the treble viol is replaced by the more versatile violin. By 1640, with the establishment of the trio texture as the sonorous ideal in instrumental music, there is no need for the alto-tenor viol. Only the bass, the violone, remains in use. Towards 1700, there are instances, particularly in operas, where the Italian tenor gamba is specified, and then it is invariably referred to as viola da gamba. This term leaves no room for misinterpretation, since the treble variety has gone out of existence and the bass has a name of its own. As will be seen presently, the term viola, used alone, refers to members of the violin family, and most often to the alto or the bass.

The preference for "arm-viols" over "knee -viols" can be observed already in Monteverdi's Orfeo. Monteverdi's string orchestra consists of a consort of viola da braccio which is used in several five part pieces. This does not mean that there were five different sizes; most likely there were just three.³⁰ There are two members of the gamba

³⁰ For more on the question of sizes, particularly as it affects the mysterious "tenor violin," see below.

family used; the violone which by Monteverdi is called contrabasso di viola,³¹ and the Italian tenor viol, which Monteverdi calls basso da gamba, or merely, viola da gamba.

When referring to members of the violin family, Monteverdi customarily uses the expression viola da braccio. A significant change in terminology can be observed in the Selva Morale,³² published in 1641. This collection contains a number of polychoral works. Sometimes instruments are included to reinforce the lines of one of the vocal choirs, and in such instances there is usually an option of using four trombones or four viola da braccio. In several pieces the strings are referred to simply as viola. This term occurs in the table of contents as well as in the title preceding the piece, so it is not a case of leaving out a modifying "da gamba" or "da braccio" because such a distinction already had been made. There is no difference in style between the works calling for viola and those specifying viola da braccio, and it would seem that the same instruments would be used in either case. Moreover, the purpose in adding instruments is largely to add brilliance and volume, particularly to the tutti passages indicated in the score, and this task is best accomplished by the violin family. Judging

³¹ For an explanation, see below under the discussion of the contrabasso.

³² C. Monteverdi: Selva Morale e Spirituale. Venice, Magni, 1641. In the Complete Works, vol. 15.

from Monteverdi's usage, it appears that by 1640 the term viola was well enough associated with the violin family to be used without the qualifying expression "da braccio".

The terminology observed in Monteverdi is still in use in Rome 20-30 years later and is employed, among other places, in the payment records at San Marcello. For the oratorio performance there on March 29, 1668, the instrumentalists are listed as follows:³³

SSri Stromenti

Lelio Colista	1, 05 (scudi)
Archangelo (Leuto)	1, 00
Carlo di Panfilio	1, 00
Giacomo Violino	1, 00
Cimbalo	1, 00

Suonatori di Viola

Dom. Gio. Batt. a	0, 60
Do. Gasparo	0, 60
Antonuccio	0, 60
N. N. viola	0, 60

Practically all the players are well-known from other records. The first group consists of two (arch-) lutes, two violins and harpsichord. In the second group, the last man is listed as a violist. The two first are elsewhere associated with respectively the violin and the violone. Antonuccio cannot be pegged with any certainty. From 1675 and on, somebody with this name often appears as a violinist, but it may not be the same man. At any rate, it is clear that the term "viola" is

³³ A. Liess, "Materialien zur römischen Musikgeschichte des Seicento". In Acta Musicologica, vol. 29 (1957), p. 146.

used for a group of string players of which at least one plays the violin.

A similar practice to that found at San Marcello is encountered at another center of Roman oratorio performances, namely San Giovanni dei Fiorentini. The records for the 1675 oratorio season show that there was a basic ensemble consisting of 12 players, but for the last four performances of the season, there were nine or more extras each time.³⁴ Only in one case are all the names of the players listed, and that is for the fourth Sunday of the season. They are divided into two groups, with a concertino of six instruments, and a "concerto grosso" consisting of six violins and four each of alto, tenor and bass instruments. One of the works performed during this season was Stradella's San Giovanni Battista, which also employed a larger group.³⁵ In the score of this work there are several instances where Stradella specifies "concerto grosso delle viole."³⁶ Now it seems safe to assume that Stradella used the same musicians as employed on other occasions, so the expression he uses refers to a group including violins, and most likely entirely made up of "arm-violis."

³⁴ See Raffaele Casimiri: "Oratorii del Masini, Bernabei, Melani, Di Pio, Pasquini e Stradella, In Roma nell'Anno 1675." Note d'Archivio, v. 13 (1936), p. 162 f.

³⁵ Casimiri, op. cit., p. 164.

³⁶ Alessandro Stradella: San Giovanni Battista. Two MS scores in Bologna, Civico Museo Bibliografia Musicale, respectively BB/361 and BB/362. The expression "concerto gross delle viole" is found, for instance, in BB/361, fol. 6 v.

This is not the only occasion where Stradella uses the term viole for the violin family. The second of his unpublished sinfonie in one source is entitled Sonata di viole cioe concerto grosso di viole concertino di violini e leuto.³⁷ The nature of the work is set forth in the three first words, Sonata di viole, -- sonata for (arm-) viols -- and this includes the violins mentioned later in the title.

The use of viole as a generic term for a string group including violins is still found as late as the turn of the century. One of G. B. Bassani's sacred vocal works, published in 1700, has added to the title con viole, e Ripieni.³⁸ The three string parts are designated as Canto viola, alto viola and Violone o viola. At first glance the solemn occasions for which the music is written would seem to justify the use of a consort of gambas. There is, however, a perfectly logical reason why the viole here should mean something else. When string instruments participate in vocal church music, the group usually consists of two violins, with or without a bass. The presence of the violins is acknowledged in the title by an expression like con violini; the bass may or may not be mentioned. Bassani, in his Note Lugubri wanted a darker tonecolor, and instead of two violins, he chose the uncommon combination of violin and viola. The logical way of referring

³⁷ Turin, Biblioteca Nazionale, Foa 11, F69. (Quoted from Claude V. Palisca, Baroque Music, Englewood Cliffs, N. J., Prentice-Hall, 1968.)

³⁸ G. B. Bassani: Le Note Lugubri Concertate ne Responsorij dell' Ufficio de Morti, a Quattro Voci, con Viole, e Ripieno. Venice, Sala, 1700.

to these instruments together is by the term "viole".

If the 17th century use of the term viole has a somewhat unexpected twist to it, the singular form, viola, is even more peculiar. It is used alone, as well as in a number of expressions, such as basso di viola, bassetto di viola, and viola da braccio. Used alone, it eventually, around 1720, became exclusively associated with the alto member of the violin family. It is used in this sense in the 17th century as well, as for instance in Cazzati's Opus VIII, published in 1648,³⁹ but it is just as common to find two other terms; namely violetta or alto viola. The use of viola, however, is not restricted to the alto instrument but it is used to denote the bass part as well. In Monteverdi's sacred music, published in 1649, the Magnificat contains two parts marked viola, one in alto and the other in bass clef.⁴⁰ It has been observed above that Monteverdi definitely uses a group of "arm-viols," so that the word viola, when found in a bass part, refers to the cello.

This usage is observed in a number of other instances up to about 1700. When G. B. Vitali was first hired at San Petronio in Bologna, he was entered in the books as sonatore di viola.⁴¹ Vitali is known to

³⁹ Maurizio Cazzati: Il secondo libro delle sonate a una, doi, tre e quattro. Venetia, Vincenti, 1648. The term "viola" is used as designation for the alto part-book.

⁴⁰ In Monteverdi, Complete Works, vol. 15:3, p. 639.

⁴¹ He was hired on Sept. 6, 1658; this is entered in Decreta Congregationis no. VI, (1650-1673) (Atti della Fabbriceria di San Petronio) Bologna, Archivio di San Petronio, MS 24, p. 99.

have been an accomplished cellist, and it is likely that he was hired in this capacity. In 1676, Carlo Grossi published a collection of songs with a small orchestra, in which the bass part is designated viola.⁴² Just nine years later, Domenico Gabrielli, in his opera Il Rodoaldo includes an aria with an elaborate obbligato bass part.⁴³ It is marked "Aria con la viola." The part extends down to C, so an Italian tenor gamba is out of the question. Gabrielli was a virtuoso cellist with the distinction of having written the earliest known works for cello solos. In his operas, he often included arias with cello obbligato, and it is quite unlikely that the aria con la viola was intended for anything but the cello.

A number of publications from this time include bass parts marked with the option Violone o Viola.⁴⁴ This confirms that the two terms are used about different instruments. One can perhaps not completely rule out the possibility that "viola" here may refer to a gamba. There is, however, practically no mention of the gamba in the music of the time; on the other hand, the term is demonstrably used for the cello.

⁴² Cav. Carlo Grossi: Moderne Melodie a voce sola. Con due, tre, quattro e cinque Stromenti e Partitura per l'organo. Op. 1. Bologna, Monti, 1676.

⁴³ D. Gabrielli: Il Rodoaldo, Modena, Biblioteca Estense, Mus. F. 418, fol 85.

⁴⁴ It is found in G. B. Bassani's Armonici Entusiasmi di Davide overo Salmi concertati a quatro voci con violini e suoi ripieni. Venice, Sala, 1690. The same option, "violone o viola", is also found in Bassani's Salmi di Compieta (1691) and Lagrima armoniche (1699).

Evidence therefore favors accepting viola as a term for cello.

It is not without significance that Bonanni also uses the term viola for the cello. His drawing (plate 56) unmistakably shows a cello with four strings, f-holes, and the player holding the bow over-hand, but the caption reads "viola." Pertinent in this connection is the description Bonanni gives of the violone:

. . . it is called violone, because it is bigger than the viola, and it has six strings with which one can produce a bigger sound than with the viola.⁴⁵

Bonanni points out that the violone has six string, which apparently is not the case with the viola. The reason why he mentions the viola at all in this particular place would seem to be that the two instruments have the same function, and that he uses the occasion to point out the differences. There is a parallel here to the definition of violone found in the Vocabulario degli Accademici della Crusca. There the term "violoncello," a diminutive of violone, is used to refer to the smaller size of bass instrument. Bonanni talks about the same two instruments, but instead of using a diminutive, he uses the normal form, viola, as the contrast to the augmentative violone. Since at this time the Italian tenor gamba was always referred to under its full name, viola da gamba, Bonanni's terminology actually leaves very little ambiguity.

⁴⁵ Bonanni, Gabinetto armonico, p. 101. ". . . si chiama Violone, perch'e piu grande della viola, ed ha sei corde, con le quali si fa maggior armonia, che nella viola.

Viola da braccio in Germany came to be associated with the alto violin and eventually gave this instrument its name, Bratsche. In Italian usage from about 1650 to 1720, the term viola da braccio most often means the cello. The term is found with some frequency in the works of Legrenzi, for instance the sonatas op. 8 and 10, and the sacred vocal music op. 9.⁴⁶ It is used as a designation for the bass part-book in opus 8. The table of contents most often calls for violone, but the two terms are not used about the same instrument. Where the table specifies violone the part never goes higher than d'. Parts for the viola da braccio, in contrast, as a rule go to e' or f', and in the sonata La Galini even to f'-sharp. These notes are all above the frets on the violone, and the cello would therefore be the appropriate instrument.

The information above throws new light on some puzzling features found in Venetian documents. The payment record of a 1665 Venetian opera performance, quoted by Arnold,⁴⁷ lists an orchestra

⁴⁶ Giovanni Legrenzi: Sonate a due, tre, cinque e sei stromenti. Libro terzo, op. 8. Bologna, Monti, 1671. First edition by Magni in Venice, 1663.

La Cetra. Libro quarto di sonate a due, tre e quattro stromenti. Op. 10. Venice, Gardano, 1682. First edition by the same publisher in 1673.

Sacri e festivi concerti. Messa e salmi a due chori, con stromenti a beneplacito. Op. 9. Venice, Gardano, 1667.

⁴⁷ Denis, Arnold: "L'incoronazione di Poppea and its orchestral requirement." In The Musical Times, vol. 104 (1963), pp. 176-8).

of four string players, of which two are violinists, one plays the violetta -- i. e., the alto violin -- and the fourth instrument is a viola da braccio. Although one might suspect that the last one had to be some kind of a bass, it is of some interest to have proof that it actually was a cello.

Similar cases are found in the lists of musicians at San Marco around 1700.⁴⁸ In 1685, as well as in 1708, the two years for which complete listings are available, there is no mention of violoncello, but in both cases there are players of the viola da braccio.

The reason why the term viola da braccio came to be associated with the cello can be surmised from Monteverdi's Orfeo. It has already been pointed out that he employs ten "arm-viols," two "contrabassi de Viola" and three bassi da gamba. Since Monteverdi does not employ neither treble nor alto/tenor viols, he may, without any ambiguity, refer to the bass as viola da gamba. This being the case, it is only natural to label the counterpart within the violin family in a similar manner, namely as viola da braccio. This usage is also without ambiguity in that the treble has a name of its own -- violin -- and the term alto viola, for reasons just given, would not refer to the gamba family.

In Orfeo the term viola da braccio is mostly found in conjunction with the qualifer basso, but there is one case in the fourth act where

⁴⁸These records are quoted by F. Gaffi in Storia della Musica nella Capella Ducale di S. Marco in Venezia, Venice, Antonelli, 1855, vol. II, p. 60.

the latter is left out. This may have been a slip prompted by an already well-established oral usage. Both terms, viola da braccio and viola da gamba occur also in other Monteverdi works to designate what he considers the bass members in each family; they may be found f. ex. in the Eighth Book of Madrigals.

Since all the information concerning the use of the term viola da braccio to denote the cello originates in Venice and since there are no records of such usage elsewhere, it appears that it was a local custom.

Among the various terms used for bowed bass instruments in Italy, the most nebulous one is undoubtedly bassetto di viola. It is frequently found in publications from the 1670's and thereafter. The parts generally have a compass from D to d', with an occasional e', and are thus within the range of the violone. The theorists are not helpful at all in determining what kind of instrument the bassetto might have been. Walther has a short entry which seems to be a guess based on the meaning of the word, rather than reflecting any positive knowledge. The Vocabulario degli Accademici della Crusca says it is "an instrument with four strings, played like a double bass."⁴⁹ This can hardly be taken literally, but the reference to four strings points to the violin family rather than the viols. So does a brief reference in B.

⁴⁹"Bassetto: Strumenti di quattro corde, che si suona come il contrabasso."

Marini's Sonate from 1626.⁵⁰ In the Sonata sopra La Monica the bass may be played by a bassetto or a viola da gamba, the option indicating that these are different instruments. In either case, however, there is no positive information of what the instrument actually was.

The question of the nature of the bassetto is important enough to prompt some guesswork. A starting point can be taken with the definition of a violone given in the Vocabulario degli Accademici della Crusca, which was quoted above:

Violone. Large viol of low pitch, which also is called Basso di viola, and, when of smaller size, violoncello.

The optional name for the violone is basso di viola, and that, of course, is exactly what the instrument is, a bass viol. Basso di viola is not a term that is used with much frequency in the period in question, but from the few instances in which it is found, it seems justified to equate it with violone.⁵¹ From this it is possible to suggest a rationale for the derivations of the diminutives bassetto and violoncello:

violone, i. e., a large bass viol . . . diminutive: violoncello,
a "small, large viol."

basso di viola, i. e., a bass viol . . . diminutive: bassetto di viola, a smaller bass, i. e., the cello

⁵⁰ Biagio Marini: Sonate, symphonie, canzoni . . . op. 8. Venice, Gardano, 1629. Preface is dated 1626, which apparently is the date of the first publication.

⁵¹ One of the few examples is G. B. Buonamente, Il settimo libro di sonate . . . A tre, due violini & basso di viola, o da braccio. Venice, Vincenti, 1637. Considering what instrument usually is found on the bass part in works of this kind, the conclusion is that basso di viola must mean violone. It clearly could not mean cello.

Considering the fluid terminology at the time, as well as the uncertainty of the theorists, it is quite within the realm of possibilities that the bassetto actually was the cello. The term starts to be used extensively just at a time when the cello comes into prominence, and there is no other instrument known that would be as suitable for the parts as the cello.

It is possible to argue that the bassetto was a kind of tenor violin with extended range, perhaps an older instrument no longer functional that was being altered. One weakness with such an argument is that it is highly doubtful whether the tenor violin ever existed. Theorists of the 16th as well as the 17th century almost always talk about the violin family as consisting of three different sizes, just like the viols. There is only one exception to this, and that is Zacconi.⁵² It is generally recognized that Zacconi is inconsistent and to some extent relies on G. M. Lanfranco's Scintille di Musica, published 60 years earlier. One thing he does not derive from Lanfranco, however, and that is the tuning of the cello, which he gives as BB-flat - F - c - g. There is no parallel in the Italian literature, and it seems that Zacconi, at best, is talking about a transient form. Altogether, it indicates that Zacconi is a suspect source of information about the violin family. Even so, it can be countered that instrumental partbooks throughout the 17th century specify

⁵² Lodovico Zacconi: Prattica Musica, book IV, chapter 56.

alto viola and tenore viola, and that the use of these terms indicate that there must have been corresponding sizes of instruments. It is true that these terms are found, but rather than referring to specific instrument sizes, they are remnants of vocal practices. In early 17th-century publications of instrumental music, it is standard practice to designate the parts as canto, alto, tenore and basso. A piece for two treble instruments will be referred to as being a due canti. These designations are used only to indicate the range of the part and not the instrument that plays. Later on, the treble part is referred to by the word violino, simply because no other instrument was ever used. If there is one middle part, it may be designated as viola, alto viola, or, most commonly, violetta, but never is the word "tenor" mentioned. When there are two middle parts, a distinction is needed, and the majority of publications use the expressions alto viola and tenore viola. The word viola indicates the instrument used, the alto violin, whereas the qualifier, alto or tenore, tells the function of the part.

This conclusion is further strengthened by certain observations in the oratorio payment records from Rome, cited above. Both at San Marcello and at San Giovanni dei Fiorentini, the instrument used on the middle parts is almost invariably referred to as violetta. The records from the latter place are by and large less detailed, but in one instance the names of all the players are listed according to their function in the orchestra. Thus, we learn that the concerto grosso consisted of six

violins, four contralti, four tenori and four bassi.⁵³ Among the players listed on the tenor part, however, there are several that in the San Marcello records appear under the heading violetta. One could of course argue that the players switched instruments, but since both tenor and alto parts invariably stay within the range of the alto violin, such an argument is at best artificial.

It would seem that the cello should have established itself as the leading bass at the same time as the violin became the leading treble instrument at the beginning of the 17th century. That did not happen, but instead the violone came into prominence. Only in the last third of the century does the cello make its presence felt, judging from the frequency with which its participation is required. The late coming may have had something to do with range. It is commonly thought that the cello had acquired its standard tuning by the beginning of the 17th century, but this is a truth in need of considerable modifications, at least as far as Italian practices go. It is true that what eventually became the standard tuning, C - G - d - a, was known, as it is mentioned by Praetorius.⁵⁴ Praetorius gives two tunings, however, the other one being a fourth higher, resulting in F - c - g - d'. The only Italian theorist at this time who mentions the lower tuning is Zacconi, but as

⁵³R. Casimiri, "Oratorii del Masini," p. 166.

⁵⁴Michael Praetorius: Syntagma Musicum, vol. II, De Organografia, p. 26.

noted above, he need not be of great concern, particularly if more reliable sources are available. Pietro Cerone gives only the higher version, down to F, without mentioning any other alternative.⁵⁵ A similar tuning is given by Banchieri, except that his is one step higher so that the lowest string is G.⁵⁶ Banchieri deals with the tunings of the violin family in two different publications. The first time is in a work on organ playing, published in 1609. In this he describes an elaborate performance of one of his masses, and he goes on to give the tunings of all the instruments that participated. There is consequently no doubt that his information reflects actual usage at the time.

Two years later, in the second edition on another work concerned with the organ, Banchieri incorporates a chapter on tuning.⁵⁷ His terminology here is somewhat different from 1609, but the tunings are the same. The work was reprinted in 1629, with a new preface, but Banchieri apparently felt no urge to alter anything in the text. Since this edition was done by a different printer, Vincenti, it would presumably not have been very difficult to incorporate changes if that had been desirable.

From the statements of the theorist, it is quite clear that the

⁵⁵ Pedro Cerone: El Melopeo y Maestro, Naples, Gargano y Nucci, 1612, p. 1058.

⁵⁶ Adriano Banchieri: Conclusioni del suono del Organo, Bologna, Rossi, 1609, p. 55.

⁵⁷ A. Banchieri: L'organo suonarino, Venice, Amadino, 1611, p. 97.

modern cello tuning had not yet been established in Italy by 1610. The significance of this is that if a bass part goes any further down than G, or possibly F, it is out of reach for the basso da braccio. The natural alternative is to use another string instrument with a suitable range, and the only one available was the violone. The frequent use of the violone probably served to retard the development of the cello. How long the old tuning of the cello remained in use is uncertain. It seems still to have been current at the time of the performance of Monteverdi's Combattimento in 1625. In this work he uses a string orchestra consisting of viola da braccio for the ritornelli, but a violone, or as he calls it, a contrabasso da gamba, to go with the harpsichord throughout the work. The lowest note encountered in the ritornelli is an F-sharp, which would be playable on a bass violin tuned to F, such as that mentioned by Praetorius and Cerone. The violone part, on the other hand, goes down to D, and would not have been playable on the high pitched

cello. ⁵⁸

⁵⁸The limited range of the early cello gives food for some further elaborate guesswork about the use of instruments in Monteverdi's Orfeo. As demonstrated elsewhere, there are a number of places in the second act where the accompaniment includes a basso di viola da braccio. In no case does its part descend lower than to F. In the same act there are a number of places in those sections where the accompaniment is played by archlute and organ where the bass may go as far down as D. Since the violone (contrabasso da gamba) never is mentioned as part of the small ensemble accompanying the vocal solos, it follows that wherever the bass part goes below F, one may rule out the use of the archlute-harpsichord-cello combination. This applies, for example, to the beginning of the third act, where Orfeo descends to the underworld. Under these somber circumstances, the most likely accompaniment would be archlute and organ. In the first act, there are any number of cases where the bass goes lower than F. The whole act is homogeneous

Reference has been made to Kircher, who in his Musurgia Universalis shows a drawing of a cello while the caption reads violone. The tuning given for this instrument is G - d - a - e', the same as given by Banchieri. Kircher's work was published in 1650. This seems like a too late date for using the old tuning, but Kircher's opinion cannot be completely ruled out, as Roman practices at this time appear to have been different from those of the rest of Italy. Bowed bass instruments of any kind apparently were quite uncommon in Rome in the middle of the 17th century, and in 1660, the normal bass instrument in the small ensembles used in churches is regularly an archlute.⁵⁹ This may reflect that the Romans at this time were out of touch with the developments in instrumental music taking place in Northern Italy, and therefore also were ignorant of the changes that had occurred in the tuning of the cello. This ignorance could not have lasted much longer, however, because it is known that modern cellos must have been available for the large scale oratorio performances that took place in the 1670's.

as far as mood goes and does not particularly invite any changes. A similar pastoral setting is found at the beginning of act two, where most of the time only archlute and harpsichord play, and it would therefore seem that these two instruments together also are used throughout the first act.

⁵⁹H. Wessely Kropik: Lelio Colista, Wien, Böhlhaus, 1961, p. 33.

The Contrabasso

It might seem that a discussion of the double bass is superfluous in a study devoted to basso continuo practices. As in the case of the violone, the concern stems from the fact that the instrument has not always been what it is thought to be today. Since the contrabasso is mentioned with some frequency in 17th-century sources and particularly in the works of Monteverdi, it is of considerable interest to have a correct understanding of the nature of the instrument and possible changes in terminology.

By way of introduction, it is worth pointing out that in the 16th century, the word contrabasso is used in a quite unexpected meaning, well demonstrated in the following quotation from Ganassi concerning the tuning of the viol family.

Tune the tenor and the alto one fourth above the bass, and the soprano one fifth above the tenor, so it will be one octave above the double bass . . .⁶⁰

The soprano is only one octave above the double bass, which is the same distance away as that of the regular bass. Ganassi, in other words, makes no distinction between the bass and the double bass, but treats these terms as synonymous. There is no question of misinterpretation

⁶⁰ S. Ganassi, Regola Rubertina, p. 13: Accordà il tenor, e contra alto, in quarta di sopra il basso, & lo soprano in quinta alto dal tenor, che sarà in otta sopra del contrabasso.

of the above passage, because the word contrabasso is used in a number of instances, and always with the clear implication of referring to the bass. This usage is unique in the theoretical literature, but there is little room to question Ganassi's authority on the subject of viols.

Around 1600, a number of theorists mention instruments that extend as far down, or further, than the modern double bass. These all belong to the viol rather than to the violin family. Zacconi gives the range of what he calls a doppioni basso as from CC to a,⁶¹ but, as so often is the case, he is not in complete agreement with the other theorists from the time.

Banchieri, in his Conclusioni dell Suono dell 'organo (1609), calls the lowest pitched viol a violone in contrabasso, and has it tuned DD - GG - C - E - A - d. Curiously, in the second edition of L'organo suonarino (1611), the contrabasso is not mentioned at all. It may be recalled that the tunings given in the Conclusioni grew out of a description of the instruments used in a specific performance of one of Banchieri's masses, so that the omission of the contrabasso in L'organo suonarino possibly indicates that it was not a widely-used item.

Praetorius calls the instrument corresponding to Banchieri's contrabasso merely violone, or, in German, Gross-Bass Viol da Gamba.⁶²

⁶¹ L. Zacconi, Prattica Musica, Book IV, ch. 56.

⁶² M. Praetorius, Syntagma Musicum v.II, p. 25.

He gives a number of alternate tunings, and among them, one that corresponds to Banchieri's. Praetorius' violone has been estimated to equal in size the modern double bass, which is 114 cm,⁶³ and this presumably also holds for Banchieri's violone in contrabasso.

Some 18th century sources indicate that the double bass is tuned an octave below the regular bass, and therefore also plays its part one octave lower than notated. The early 17th-century Italian contrabasso stands one-fourth below the regular bass gamba, which is the violone, so there is no rationale in the system of tunings which indicates that the instrument should transpose its part down. With the exception of Praetorius, the theorists leave the matter untouched. Praetorius, significantly, does not mention octave transposition in connection with the normal double bass, but only when he discusses what he terms a Gar gross Bass-Viol or SubBassgeigen, a monstrosity with a body 140 cm long, or one-fourth again as large as the regular contrabasso. It is interesting to note that not even this giant is specifically designed to function in the lower octave. Praetorius describes how he at first used it on regular bass parts, and then, apparently as an experiment, tried it in the lower octave, where it at a distance has a very pleasing effect, similar to a 16 foot stop on an organ. When the Gar gross Bass-Viol is to be used as a modern double bass, a separate part has to be made up:

⁶³N. Besaraboff: Ancient European Musical Instruments, Boston, Harvard University Press, 1941, p. 361.

If one desires to use this big SubBassgeigen, the bass-part has to be re-written, by putting the bass clef on the middle line and transpose up all the lower notes so the part has the appearance of a low tenor. This way, it is easily performed by a musician who normally plays a tenor instrument, which is the reason why such very low instruments should be tuned one octave below the regular tenor.⁶⁴

Praetorius is somewhat inconsistent here in that the SubBass has a very unorthodox tuning, DD - EE - AA - C - F, and consequently, the tenor fingerings would not work. The most likely instrument for this purpose is the regular contrabasso, for which one of the tunings is exactly one octave below the tenor. The range of the double bass part is rather peculiar, at least for the modern observer. By using the baritone clef and transposing the lower notes up -- presumably so as to avoid ledger lines -- the lowest sounding note comes to AA. In other words, as far as range is concerned, the part could have been played on the violone. One must therefore assume that there were other qualities, primarily tone color, that attracted musicians at the time to the larger sizes.

The only early 17th-century Italian composer who mentions the double bass with any frequency is Monteverdi. The list of instruments in Orfeo includes two contrabassi di viola. In Il Combattimento, he requires one contrabasso da gamba, and elsewhere in the Eighth Book

⁶⁴ M. Praetorius: Syntagma Musicum, vol. II, p. 38. Dass, wenn man off dieser grossen SubBassgeigen . . . mitmusiciren wil, so muss der Bass umbgeschreiben, das : off die mittelste Linie und die unterste . noten alle umb eine Octav hoher, gleich einem niedrigen Tenor gesetzt werden; Und alsdann kompt es den Instrumentisten gar leicht und eben als wenn er sonst off ein Tenor Instrumente seine Parthey machte; Diesweil solche gar tieffe Instrumenta gleich in einer Octav unter dem rechten Tenor stehen.

of Madrigals there are several pieces which simply call for contrabasso. Although the terms vary somewhat, the only suitable instrument known is the double bass member of the viol family, described by Banchieri and Praetorius.

Monteverdi's use of the contrabasso agrees with the procedure outlined by Praetorius. When the part is notated in bass clef, it plays at pitch. This can be deduced from a comparison of the use of bass-line instruments in Orfeo and Il Combattimento. When, in Orfeo, a bass-line instrument is included with the basso continuo for the accompaniment of a vocal solo, it invariably is a viola da braccio basso. In Il Combattimento its role has been taken over by the contrabasso da gamba, which, according to the preface, goes with the harpsichord all the time. The desired effect was undoubtedly the same in both cases, and octave transposition for the contrabasso is out of the question. When such transposition is desired, the part is written in another clef. In Vago Augelletto, from the Eighth Book of Madrigals, the contrabasso plays from the first alto part, and in the corresponding clef. Since the alto and tenor violins are one and the same instrument, the procedure is parallel to that described by Praetorius, the only difference being the use of clef. The contrabasso part is the real bass, and a proper effect is only achieved when transposed down.⁶⁵ There are several instances

⁶⁵ The modern edition of Monteverdi's Complete Works (ed. G. F. Malipiero, Vienna, Universal, 1926-42, v. 8) fails to indicate the original clef. The part is transposed down, but at times two octaves instead of one. The range of the part, when properly transposed, is G to a.

in Orfeo in which the contrabasso participates, and where the bass is notated either in baritone or in tenor clef. One such case is the sinfonia preceding the third act; the same piece is repeated at several points throughout the act. The participation of the contrabasso is not immediately clear in the score. When the sinfonia appears, it is preceded by the note "Here enter the trombones, cornetti and regals, and the 'violin family,' wood organs, and harpsichords are silenced."⁶⁶ The absence of any mention of the gambas and the contrabasso indicates that these instruments continued to play. This is confirmed later in the act, when there is a five part chorus, immediately followed by the same sinfonia. The chorus is accompanied by five trombones, two bass gambas and contrabasso; as in similar instances elsewhere in the opera, these instruments continued to play in the following orchestral number. The sinfonia has seven independent instrumental parts, which are played by the two cornetti and the five trombones. The two bass gambas probably doubled the two lowest of these which both are notated in baritone clef. There is an eighth part for the basso continuo which is an extract of the lowest sounding notes in the two just mentioned. It is notated in baritone clef, and that is rather peculiar, since it could equally well have been written in bass clef without ledger lines. The answer is that the

⁶⁶"Qui entrano li Tromb, Corn, & Regali, e taciono le viole da bracio, & Organi di legno, Clavicem . . ." In the original print, this direction appears at the bottom of the page where the sinfonia first occurs; it is not included in the Complete Works (vol. 11, p. 75).

notation is for the purpose of having the contrabasso play the part in the lower octave, which would be a most appropriate effect in this relatively large instrumental group.

The opening Tocatta in Orfeo also lends itself to the use of the contrabasso in the lower octave. The bass is notated in tenor clef, so that the pedal c is written on the space below the first line of the staff. With all the instruments participating, the use of the lower octave supplies a very desirable sonorous support.

It is peculiar that Monteverdi should have chosen contrabasso for the bass part, when standard practice was to use either the cello or the violone. One might expect a central figure in the development of a new tradition to set the example, rather than to represent a tangential usage. The case for the contrabasso, is, however, less than totally convincing. In the first place, Banchieri, who evidently was very well informed about the practice at the time, leads one to believe that the real contrabasso was rather rarely used. Secondly, the bass part in Orfeo exhibits an occasional d', which would be well out of range for double bass.⁶⁷ Since the instrument in question must belong to the viol family, one is led to believe that Monteverdi actually had in mind the violone. To explain such a use of terms, one would have to assume that Monteverdi

⁶⁷ With nine frets, the highest note on the contrabasso is b. On the violone it is quite common to go one half step above the top fret, but even allowing for that, the contrabasso is still a major second short of the d' found in Orfeo.

still was operating with 16th-century viol tunings and terminology, according to which the bass gamba went down to D. The next size down would then have its lowest string tuned GG, which is the same as the violone. The logical name for this instrument would be contrabasso.

Allowing for the possibility that some of the conclusions drawn with regard to Monteverdi's contrabasso may be debatable, it is nevertheless certain that he is not using a double bass in the modern sense of the word. The modern instrument is used to reinforce the bass through doubling at the lower octave, and such doubling is desirable mainly where there is a fairly large orchestra. Music of the first half, or even two thirds, of the 17th century tends to feature solo performance or small ensembles, and in this context the double bass is not needed. In Orfeo it is primarily the pieces in the 16th-century tradition of large ensembles which employ the transposing double bass, not those in the new style.

In order to trace the emergence of the modern double bass, one should concentrate on the time when large orchestras come into existence, and in Italy that means towards the end of the 17th century. Even as late as the 1660's, available records indicate that orchestras in Rome as well as in Venice had string sections with one or, at the most, two players to a part.⁶⁸ A harbinger of what was to come is seen in the

⁶⁹ D. Arnold: "L'Incoronazione di Poppea and its Orchestral Requirements," Musical Times, vol. 106 (1963), p. 176. H. Wessely Kropik: Lelio Colista, Vienna, Boehlhaus, 1961, p. 57. Andreas Liess: "Materialien zur roemischen Musikgeschichte des Seicento," Acta Musicologica, vol. 29 (1957), p. 137-171.

Cesti Serenata performed in Florence in 1662.⁶⁹ A string orchestra of 19 was employed, including a double bass. It is quite clear that the large orchestra was unusual, because the preface points out that the doubling of the instrumental parts was done according to French usage.⁷⁰ The reference to France is interesting in that it suggests that French orchestral practices may have been influential in Italy. Whatever the reason, it appears that Italian orchestras grew dramatically in size after 1665. This development is well demonstrated in the payment records from San Marcello in Rome. The average size of the string group grew from a mere two violins in 1664 to about 17 strings altogether in 1682, as seen in the following statistics:

Average size of the string orchestra used at San Marcello in Rome,

1664 - 1682	
1664	2 violins
1667-8	7 strings
1674-5	11 strings
1677	15 strings
1682	17 strings

The records from San Giovanni dei Fiorentini from 1675 confirm that

⁶⁹ See above, "Large Scale Dramatic Works".

⁷⁰ "Le Zinfonie (sic) sono state raddoppiate all' uso de concerti di Francia, . . ."

⁷¹ Andreas Liess: "Materialen zur roemischen Musikgeschichte des Seicento". The article, unfortunately, in many cases only gives the names of the more prominent participants in performances, and leaves out even a summary of the total number and what kinds of instruments were used. Such information would be very useful to have, both in tracing the growth of the orchestra and in determining the terminology used.

11 might have been the average size of the string group there also, but several performances employed perhaps as many as 20 players.⁷²

Less is known about Venetian operatic practices, but an account from 1679 of a 40 piece orchestra may indicate that things were changing there as well.⁷³

The first appearance of a double bass player in the orchestra at San Marcello is in 1676, in a performance which employed a string section of 14. In the 1675 performances at San Giovanni dei Fiorentini there is always one contrabasso included, sometimes even two. From this time on, the instrument is a regular member of the string orchestra, and it is mentioned all the time in the records at San Marcello. Similarly, it is included from the very beginning in the orchestras hired by the Ottoboni family in Rome, the records of which start in 1689.⁷⁴

At San Giovanni dei Fiorentini in 1675, there is frequent mention of two double bass players, who both often participated in the same performances. One of them, with the name Simone, always is paid on a par with the rest of the instrumentalists. The other one, F. M. d'Altieri, is regularly paid about four times as much as the orchestra regulars, and well above the members of the concertino. It appears that he must have had an important part, but his role is not immediately clear.

⁷²Casimiri, "Oratorii del Masini . . .", p. 164-6.

⁷³Le nouveau mercure galante, Paris 1679, p. 66-7 and 71.

⁷⁴S. Hansell, "Orchestral Practices . . ." p. 399-401.

He participated for example in Stradella's San Giovanni Battista, but although there are several cello solos, there are none that can be associated with a double bass. There are, however, intriguing features in other scores from the same time, as for instance, Pasquini's La donna ancora e fedele, performed in Rome in 1676.⁷⁵ Throughout the work, the bass part is remarkably low so it stays in the range C - c for considerable periods of time. The recitatives constantly have the bass in this register. The bass only rarely goes above b, with a frequency of about once in 20-30 pages. It is conceivable that at the time the function of the double bass was not definitely established and that it was tried on the bass part in cases such as this. The presence of an apparently outstanding player lends credence to such an assumption. Moreover, the sudden growth of the orchestra, as well as the sudden prominence of the bass part encountered in arias from the 1670's, indicates that there might have been a good deal of experimentation which was fruitless. Pasquini's work might belong to this category.

Musical history knows of several examples of fabricated claims to the invention of new instruments. One of these is Michele Todini's, who in 1676 announced himself as the inventor of the double bass, which, he says, he introduced into the music in Rome.⁷⁶ His claim is now

⁷⁵ B. Pasquini, La donna ancora e fedele, MS score in Modena, Biblioteca Estense, Mus. F. 902.

⁷⁶ Michele Todini: Dichiarazione della Galleria Armonica Eretto in Roma, Toma Tizzoni, 1676, p. 80-81.

generally disregarded, but is nevertheless of some significance. The fact that a claim could be made at all indicates that the use of the double bass was a novelty in Rome at the time, and confirms the picture that emerges from the payment records. On this background, it is even conceivable that Todini helped to "re-invent" the double bass, an instrument that seems to have been unknown in Rome at least for several generations.

Basso Continuo Accompaniment by one String Instrument Alone

Bowed instruments lend themselves to a modest amount of chordal playing, but, generally speaking, the difficulties involved are of a magnitude that would seem to prohibit their use to realize a bass. One string instrument specially designed for chordal playing was the lira da gamba, variously known as lirone, archiviolata lira, and other names. The instrument is described by S. Cerreto⁷⁷ as having a flat bridge so that it is difficult to play only one string at the time. The peculiar tuning with four open strings in octaves and seven strings over the fingerboard in alternating ascending fifths and descending fourths (G - g - c - c' - g - d' - a - e' - b - f'# - c'#), made it particularly well suited for chordal playing in the middle register. Early 17th-century writers differ on the capabilities of the instrument. Guistiniani says that the lira may be used

⁷⁷ Scipione Cerreto: Della prattica musica. Naples, Carlina, 1601, p. 323.

alone to accompany the voice.⁷⁸ Agazzari, on the other hand, does not consider it as a satisfactory basso continuo instrument but indicates that it played the inner parts.⁷⁹ Considering the range, Agazzari's opinion is well founded and his view is supported by contemporary indications that the lira was used mostly in conjunction with bass instruments. G. B. Doni, for example, mentions that the Florentines, presumably meaning Peri, Caccini, et al., used two instruments to accompany the voice: a viol on the bass part, and a lira to fill in the harmonies.⁸⁰ The lira is mentioned several times in the 1589 Florentine Intermedii and its function there appears to have been similar.

⁷⁸ V. Giustiniani, Discorso sopra la Musica; in Solerti, L'origine del melodramma, p. 123.

⁷⁹ Strunk, Source Readings, p. 425 and 429.

⁸⁰ G. B. Doni, Musica Scenica, p. 113: ". . . si servono solo di un basso di Viola per fare la consonanza principale, con la Voce, e per ripieno di una Lira Grande . . ."

The free translation of the word ripieno may warrant explanation. Ripieno, in Italian, refers to something that is being filled in. In 17th-century sacred vocal music the word is used in concerted works: in the vocal sections the soloists sing all the time but at certain points their parts were reinforced by a chorus, referred to as a ripieno, which "filled in" for the purpose of making a massive effect. This is also the meaning in early instrumental concertos, such as Corelli's, where the two solo violins played all the time and the orchestra was used intermittently and mostly for doubling the main parts. In the later concertos, where the soloist, or solists, and the orchestra no longer share the same material but are contrasted with each other, the orchestra does not actually function to "fill in", and the expression "ripieno strings", although used at the time, is really a misnomer. As for the lira, in the quotation from Doni, it was evidently used to "fill in" a realization between the single lines of the bass viol and the voice.

Compared to the lira da gamba, the viols seem considerably less suited for playing an accompaniment, yet it is clear that at times they were used in such a manner. Already Castiglione (1528) talks about "singing to the viol," but Boyden suggests that this may have referred to the lira da braccio.⁸¹ The Intermedii performed at the wedding of Cosimo Medici in Florence in 1539 included a four part madrigal that was rendered by a solo soprano, who also "played all the parts on a violone," in other words, on a viol.⁸²

The most conclusive evidence for the use of the viol to accompany the voice is contained in the second part of Ganassi's Regola Rubertina.⁸³ Chapter 16 is devoted to an explanation of how to accompany a single voice on the gamba, culminating with a four part madrigal intabulated for this purpose.

The 16th-century practice of using a viol alone for the accompaniment of a solo is also in evidence in the "thorough-bass period." The scattered references usually only point to a viola da gamba, but

⁸¹ Castiglione: Il Cortegiano (printed 1528, written between 1508 and 1516), in Strunk, Source Readings, p. 28f. David D. Boyden comments on the matter in The History of Violin Playing (London, Oxford University Press, 1965), p. 16, footn.

⁸² Musiche fatte nelle nozze dello illustrissimo duca di Firenze il signor Cosimo Medici, (Venice, Bardane, 1539); the sixth number "O begli anni dell' oro (a 4), sonato a la fine del 3. atto da Sileno con un Violone sonando tutte le parti, et cantando il soprano."

⁸³ Silvestro Ganassi: Lettonne seconda pur della pratica di sonare il Violone d'arco da tasti. N. p., printed for the author, 1543.

Praetorius provides a different twist by mentioning the viola bastarda, or, as it is called in English, the *lyra viol*. It is not brought up where he discusses the viola bastarda per se, but appears in a rather off-hand manner in the discussion of the theorbo, by way of comparison:

The only function of the theorbo, just like the viola bastarda, is to accompany a soprano or tenor voice.⁸⁴

The viola bastarda, like the lira, had a flat bridge that facilitated chordal playing, and among the viols, it is by far the most likely instrument to be used for a basso continuo realization. Praetorius is, however, the only one to mention the instrument for this purpose.

The French viol player Maugars, who visited Rome in 1639, gives undeniable evidence that the viola da gamba was used for accompaniment. In his description, quoted above, of the artistry of the singer Leonora Baroni, he says that "she never needs to ask the assistance of a theorbo or a viol player . . . because she plays both instruments very well herself." The impression is that either instrument alone would suffice for the accompaniment, which is similar to what Praetorius says. It is tempting to go one step further and conclude that she must have been using a viola bastarda, but that would be entirely within the realm of speculation.

⁸⁴"Theorba. Ist alleine dahin gerichtet . . . dass ein Discant oder Tenor viva voce, gleich wie zu der Viola de Bastarda, darein gesungen werde." M. Praetorius, Syntagma Musicum, vol. II, p. 52.

Nicola Matteis, an Italian who sought his fortune in England, published a treatise concerned with the realization of a basso continuo on the guitar, entitled, The False Consonnances of Music. The treatise, which gives no indication of publisher nor date but generally is assumed to have appeared around 1680, is, on the title page, said to be "A great help likewise to those that would play exactly upon the Harpsichord, Lute or Base-Violl. . ." In other words, the bass-viol, like the lute and the harpsichord, is used to realize the basso continuo. It would be interesting to know whether Matteis still was thinking in Italian, in which case the term "bass viol" would refer to the violone. If so, Matteis is the only writer known to have indicated that the violone was used for accompaniment.

One final item of interest is a MS from around 1700 with the title "Practical Method, or Rules for Playing the Basso Continuo on the Viola da Gamba."⁸⁵ The violone is not mentioned at all, and the instrument referred to in the title is the Italian tenor gamba. The "Method" is somewhat disappointing in that it tells nothing about the circumstances under which the viol may be used. Most of the content consists of examples of figured bass, with explanations of what the figures mean so as to

⁸⁵ Modo pratico, o sia regola per accompagnare il basso continuo per la viola da gamba. Bologna, Civico Museo Bibliografia Musicale, MS D/117. The call number actually refers to a collection of loose leaves in different hands, and concerned with the playing of the viola da gamba and the viola d'amore.

enable the player to make a realization. Its main significance is that it proves that members of the viol family were still used for the realization of a basso continuo in Italy at the beginning of the 18th century.

TABLE III. Summary of terms associated with bowed bass instruments in 17th-century Italy.

Term	1600	1650	1700	1750
bassetto			probably the cello (1670-1720)	
basso di viola	bass of either the violin or the viol family	appears to refer to the Italian bass viol, and not the cello		
contrabasso	a regular 16th-century bass gamba and gamba (D - b')	double bass gamba	a real double bass	
viola	any member of the viol and the violin families		most often the alto viola, but up to ca. 1720 also used for the cello	
viola da braccio	any member of the violin family		Venetian term for the cello up to ca. 1720	
viola da gamba	any member of the gamba family		the Italian tenor gamba (D - b')	
viola	used collectively about members of the violin as well as the viol family, or both mixed		refers to members of the violin family, except that the bass instrument may be a <u>violone</u>	
Violoncello			term appears ca. 1660, and replaces all others ca. 1720	
violoncino		used for the cello, ca. 1640-1680		
violone	generic term: viol family	Italian bass gamba (GG - e')	Italian bass gamba and cello	instrument functioning as a double bass

CHAPTER X
THE ARCHLUTE

Of the important instruments of the Baroque era, none has received so little attention as the archlute. The literature on the archlute is disappointingly meager, and much confusion exists about its use, particularly with regard to Italian practices.¹ From the preceding pages, it is evident that the instrument was widely used in all types of 17th century music so that an inquiry into its function and manner of playing is long overdue.²

Throughout its history the archlute is associated with accompaniment or ensemble playing. In the first quarter of the 17th century, one finds a certain amount of solo literature, but thereafter only four such collections are known.³ The role of the archlute was thus not dissimilar to that of the harpsichord, which, during the seicento, was primarily used

¹ In France, where the instrument also was widely used, there are a number of instruction books from the last half of the 17th century: N. Fleury: Methode pour apprendre facilement à toucher le Theorbe sur la Basse continue, Paris, 1660; A. M. Bartolomi: Table pour apprendre facilement a toucher le Theorbe sur la basse continue, Paris: Ballard, 1669; E. -D Delair; Traité d'accompagnement pour le theorbe Paris, n.d. These, of course, are not necessarily applicable to Italian practices.

² There is an extended article on the subject by H. Quittard, "Le theorbe comme instrument d'accompagnement," SIM, vol. 6 (1910), pp. 221-237 and 362- 375, based largely on treatises. This approach is too limited, in that the most important clues to Italian practices are found in the music itself, as well as in contemporary descriptions of performances.

³ A. Piccinini: Intavolatura di Liuto, Bologna, Monti, 1639; B. Gianoncelli: Balletti, Venice, 1650; two collections by G. Pittoni, published by Monti in Bologna in 1669, 12 sonate da chiesa per Tiorba sola col basso per l'organo, and 12 sonate da camera, per tiorba sola col basso per il clavicembalo.

for accompaniment. During the 18th century, the harpsichord gradually rose from subservience to become a favorite solo instrument, while the archlute went on the decline and by 1750 was not prominently used any more.

Allessandro Piccinini, a famed lutenist and apparently the only Italian of the 17th century to write about archlute playing, claims to have invented the instrument in the 1590's.⁴ He is not alone in making such claims, but the history of the archlute definitely goes further back. The earliest known reference is in an inventory of the musical instruments in the possession of a member of the Fugger family in 1566, in which is mentioned a lute with two necks.⁵

A painting of Lady Mary Sidney (d. 1586), reproduced as the frontispiece in F. W. Galpin's Old English Instruments of Music, shows her standing with an archlute of approximately her own size.⁶ It is assumed that the instrument was brought back to England from Italy by Lady Mary's son. At this time the archlute is also mentioned in musical sources; as observed in the discussion of large scale dramatic works (Chapter. VI), the instrument was prominently used in the Florentine Intermedii of 1589.

⁴A. Piccinini: Intavolatura di liuto e di chitarrone, Bologna, Moscatelli, 1623. The work contains a substantial introduction on playing the lute as well as the archlute.

⁵G. Kinsky: "A. Piccinini und sein Arciliuto," Acta Musicologica, vol. 10 (1938), p. 104.

⁶F. W. Galpin: Old English Instruments of Music, London, Methuen, 1911.

At the beginning of the 17th century, the archlute became associated with the performance of monodies, and it is one of the instruments most frequently mentioned for accompaniment in this repertory.⁷ Whether it was as extensively used in the secular cantata is not known. It did, however, become a prominent member of the orchestra, in opera as well as in oratorio, and it was common in large churches to have an archlute player in the permanent ensemble. The archlute was also a popular choice for more informal events. The musically talented orphan girls in the Venetian conservatories were often hired in small groups to furnish music on social occasions, and the most popular instrumentalists for this purpose were the string players and the lutenists.⁸

The archlute reaches its zenith of popularity just around 1700, as can be witnessed in its wide distribution as well as in the virtuoso obbligato parts encountered. The esteem in which it was held, is reflected in the observations of the French cleric F. Ragueneau, who visited Rome in 1698. To demonstrate the excellency of Italian instrumentalists, he named three outstanding players whom he had heard play together in the same opera-orchestra.⁹ Two of them are still remembered: the violinist Arcangelo Corelli and the harpsichordist Bernardo Pasquini. The third, along with

⁷ N. Fortune, "Italian Secular Song," p. 186.

⁸ D. Arnold: "Instruments and Instrumental Teaching in the Early Italian Conservatories," Galpin Society Journal, no. 18 (March, 1965) p. 75.

⁹ Francois Ragueneau: Parallèle des Italiens et des Français (1702). Translation in Strunk, Source Readings, p. 487.

his instrument, is totally unknown today: Gaetani, who performed on the archlute.

Up to about 1730, the archlute was still prominently used, although clearly on the decline. Fewer players were employed, and so few musicians were proficient on it that even the smaller number of posts could not be filled. At San Marco in Venice, there were four archlute players in 1685, three in 1708, and only two in 1714. Moreover, in 1714, the maestro di Capella, Biffi, indicates that it was not possible to find new players.¹⁰ Benedetto Marcello, also a Venetian, in his famous Il teatro alla moda fails to mention the archlute at all. Everyone, from the prima donna to the double bass-player got his share of unkind comments, and it is hard to believe that Marcello would have left out as grateful an object for satire as the archlute unless it simply was not very prominently in sight.

In 1747 the archlute was removed from the payroll at San Petronio in Bologna.¹¹ Eight years later, F. Algarotti complained that it was no longer used in opera orchestras.¹² It is true that the only known Italian treatise other than Piccinini's was written in 1759 by a Bolognese painter,

¹⁰ D. Arnold: "Orchestras in Eighteenth-Century Venice," Galpin Society Journal, vol. 19 (1966), p. 6, and Francesco Caffi, Storia della Musica Sacra nella già Capella Ducale di S. Marco in Venezia, Venice, Antonelli, 1855, vol. 2, p. 60-61.

¹¹ This information was kindly given me by S. Paganelli, Librarian at San Petronio, and at the Civico Museo Bibliografia Musicale.

¹² Francesco Algarotti: Saggio sopra l'opera in musica, (1755), translation in Strunk, Source Readings, p. 668.

Filippo dalla Casa,¹³ but by this time it had outlived its usefulness, and within a half a century would disappear altogether.

The archlute, as the name suggests, can be described as a "magnified lute." The body is larger than the regular lute: in Praetorius' words, "not unlike the bass lute";¹⁴ Piccinini holds that it actually evolved from the bass lute.¹⁵ The chief distinguishing feature is the enlarged neck with two peg-boxes (see Examples X-5-7). One peg-box is situated about the middle of the neck and controls the strings which extend over the fretted fingerboard. The other is at the very end of the neck and tunes the bass strings which lie outside the fingerboard. The stopped strings are the same as on the normal lute. The addition of bass strings is a further development of a tendency apparent during the 16th century, namely to extend the range of the lute downwards.

One of the first theorists to mention the archlute is Adriano Banchieri. The instrument, which is referred to as chitarrone, has 13 courses.¹⁶ The tuning is indicated in staff notation as shown in Example X-1. The topmost course may be tuned down one octave but may also be left at the proper level.

¹³ Filippo dalla Casa: Regole di Musica, ed anco Le Regole per accompagnare sopra la Parte per Suonare il Basso continuo, & per l'Arcileuto Francese, e per la Tiorba. Bologna, Civico Museo Bibliografia Musicale, EE/155.

¹⁴ M. Praetorius, De Organographia, p. 52.

¹⁵ A. Piccinini, Intavolatura, cap. XXVIII.

¹⁶ A. Banchieri, L'organo suonarino, 1611 edition, p. 98.

Example X:1 Archlute tuning according to Banchieri.

Stopped courses Open courses

8va -----J

Example X:2a. Tuning of the Roman Chitarrone (Praetorius).

Stopped courses Open courses

8va -----J

Example X:2b Tuning of the Paduan theorbo (Praetorius).

Stopped courses Open courses

8va -----J

.

Praetorius, as one might expect, goes into considerably more detail than Banchieri, and gives a quite precise description of several types of Italian archlutes:

The (theorbos) made in Rome, called chitarrone, have a very long neck, so as to acquire a total length of 6 1/2 Schuch and 2 Zoll. The body is not as big, broad and inconvenient to handle as are those [instruments] made up to the present in Padua, which are only five Schuch long. The Roman version (. . .) has only six courses over the fingerboard, whereas the Paduan has eight. In either case, there are eight courses on the long neck, and these lie outside the fingerboard. However, as new inventions and ideas for changes come up all the time, nothing certain may be written about these matters.¹⁷

The tunings for the two instruments are given in Example X-2, and show that the upper two courses in either case are taken one octave down. The theorbo comes out with 16 courses, whereas the chitarrone has only 14. Unlike Banchieri, who included an E-flat and a B-flat, Praetorius uses an unaltered scale for the bass strings. Praetorius' concluding statement is worthy of special attention as it indicates that the archlute still was in the process of development.

Piccinini's archlute has 14 courses. As indicated in Example X-3,

¹⁷ M. Praetorius, De organographia, p. 52:
 Die zu Rom gemacht/ und Chitarrone genennet werden/ die haben ein gar sehr langen Halss/ als/ dass desselben lenge mit dem Corpore 6 1/2 Schuch und 2. Zoll aussträgt; Und ist das Corpus nicht so gar gross/ breit und unbequem zu halten und zu begreifen/ als die bissher zu Padova gemacht worden/ und nur 5. Schuch lang seyn. Die Romanische (. . .) haben off dem Griffe doruff die Bünde liegen/ nur 6. Saitten oder Chor/ Die Padoanische aber 8 Saitten, An dem gar langen Halse aber seynd an beyden Sorten 8. Saitten / ausserhalb derer/ die off dem Griffe liegen. Wiewohl von jahren zu jahren allezeit mehr enderungen hierinnen vorfallen und erdacht werden: Darumb auch nichts gewisses hiervon zu schreiben.

he avoids giving definite pitches.¹⁸ He assumes that the reader knows the intervals between the stopped courses, and the bass is indicated relative to these in tablature, one octave above the actual sound. His table does not indicate anything about the two upper courses, but elsewhere (cap. XXVIII) Piccinini mentions in passing that they were taken one octave down.

If for the sake of comparison the top course on Piccinini's archlute is set at g, one arrives at something quite similar to Banchieri's tuning, with two flats in the bass. There is one peculiar feature: all the bass courses descend stepwise, except that last one which skips up a sixth. There is reason to believe that the last course also should continue the descent and be an EE rather than an E. Piccinini notated the bass courses in tablature, one octave above the actual sound. The lowest pitch that can be written this way is the GG of the 13th course (notated as an open 6th course). Anything below GG would have to be written two octaves above the actual sound. If Piccinini meant to indicate an EE he would have had to notate it the way he did, and in the absence of any contemporary evidence in support of the E it would seem that he had the

¹⁸ It was common practice that lutenists and guitarists did not tune to an absolute pitch (which in any case did not exist). A quarter century later, Kircher indicates that the theorbo is tuned to a, rather than g (Musurgia Universalis, p. 477). Dalla Casa, in 1759, also gives a (Regole di Musica, fol. 7v.). It is possible that the higher tuning came to be standard during the 17th century, but the limited amount of source materials, as well as Kircher's lack of practical musical experience leaves the case inconclusive.

Example X:3. Open courses on the archlute according to Piccinini.

Assumed tuning of the stopped courses:

1. g; 2. d; 3. a; 4. f; 5. c; 6. G

	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
					3	2	0	
		3	2	0				4
	0							

Transcription:

8va ----- [G1]

Example X:4. Tuning of the theorbo, according to Kircher.

Open courses

Stopped courses

8va -----

lower octave in mind. The tuning is still peculiar, however, as it results in the interval of a third rather than a second between the two lowest courses. A possible explanation is that a bass F is already available but not E-natural, and that consequently a course of the pitch class e would be more useful.

Piccinini used the terms arciliuto, chitarrone, and tiorba interchangeably, and although some composers may have had more specific connotations in mind, it seems impossible today to make any distinctions between them during the first two or three decades of the 17th century. Eventually the term tiorba came to be associated with a smaller instrument than the other two. This came as a result of changes in the lute proper which eventually lead to its replacement by a similar, yet in many ways quite different instrument.

The renaissance lute with six courses is still mentioned in the early 17th century, f. ex. by Banchieri.¹⁹ The instrument was, however, clearly obsolete, as reflected in the following quotation from Praetorius:

At present the lute most often has a long neck, almost like the theorbo. Over the fretted fingerboard it has eight or seven double courses, and on the outside of the fingerboard, attached to the longest neck, it has six single courses which embellish and reinforce the bass very well. There is no particular difference between this lute and the theorbo except that the lute has double courses over the fingerboard whereas the

¹⁹In the 2nd edition of L'Organo suonarino, p. 98.

theorbo exclusively uses single courses, and on the theorbo the two highest strings must be tuned one octave down.²⁰

As to size, the theorbo and the lute are apparently not much different, this being demonstrated in Praetorius' drawing of the two instruments, reproduced in Example X-6. In his opinion the distinguishing features are two: the lute uses double courses as opposed to single on the theorbo, and on the latter the two upper strings are tuned one octave down.

A lute with added bass strings is no longer the same instrument, and this is sometimes acknowledged in the use of the term "theorbized lute". Praetorius uses the Latin form Testudo Theorbata in the text to his illustrations (Example X-6); the Italian version, liuto attiorbato is not infrequently found in publications from the two first decades of the 17th century.²¹ Whatever the name, by 1630 the theorbized lute had completely

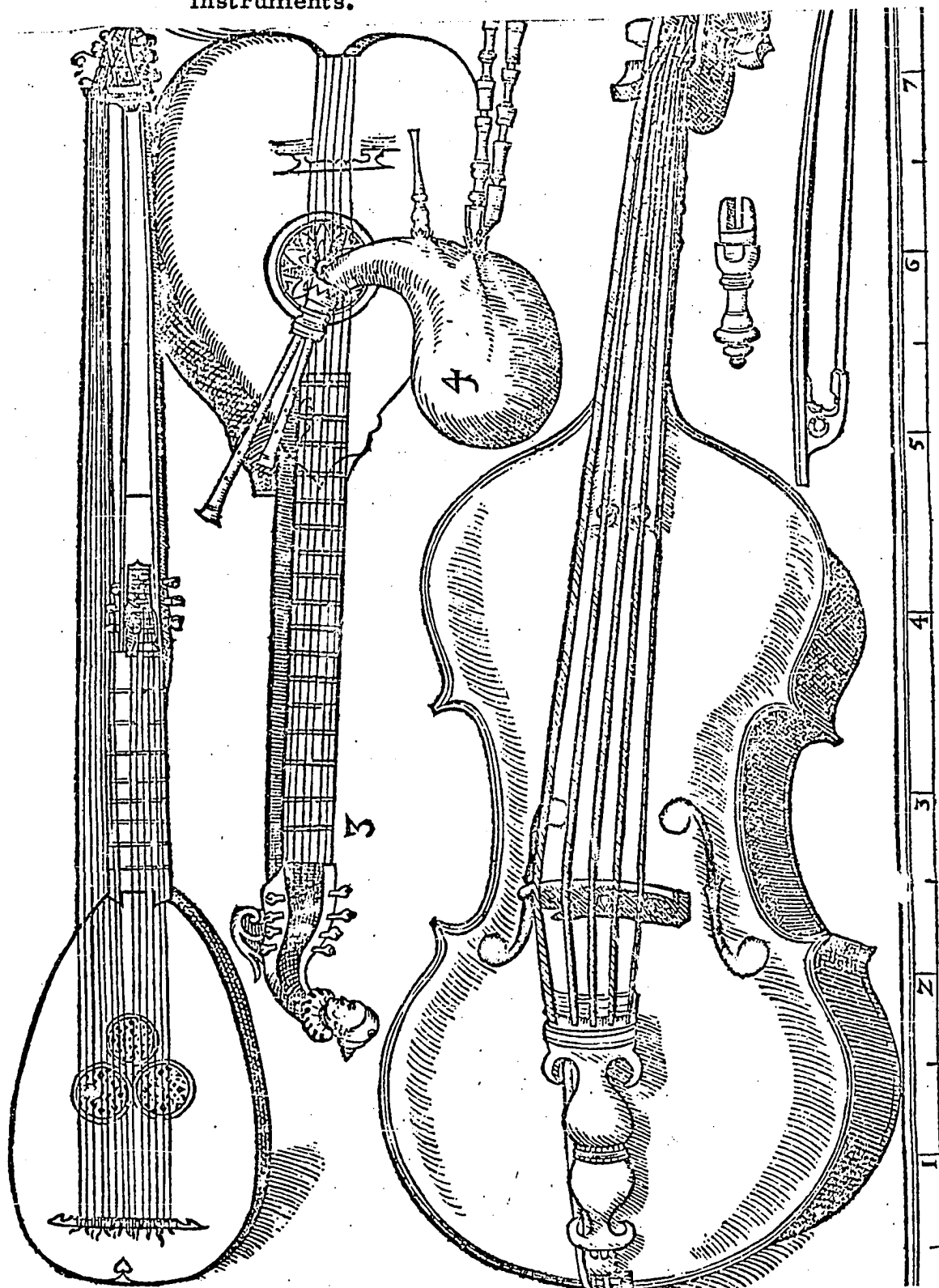
²⁰ M. Praetorius: De organographia, p. 50f.

Jetzo hat man meistens Lauten mit einem langen Kragen / der Theorben fast gleich / hat offm Halse / doruff die Bünde liegen / (der Griff genant) 8. oder 7. Chor mit doppelten Saiten / und ausswärts off dem lengsten Theorbenkragen oder Halse / 6. einzelne Saiten / welche dann den Bass trefflich sehr zieren / ound prangend machen. Und ist unter dieser Lauten und der Theorba kein sonderlicher unterscheid / als dass die Laute offm Griff den Bunden doppelte Saiten; die Theorba aber durch und durch nur einfache Saiten haben: Und in der Theorba muss / die Quint und Quart umb eine Octav tieffer gestimmt werden.

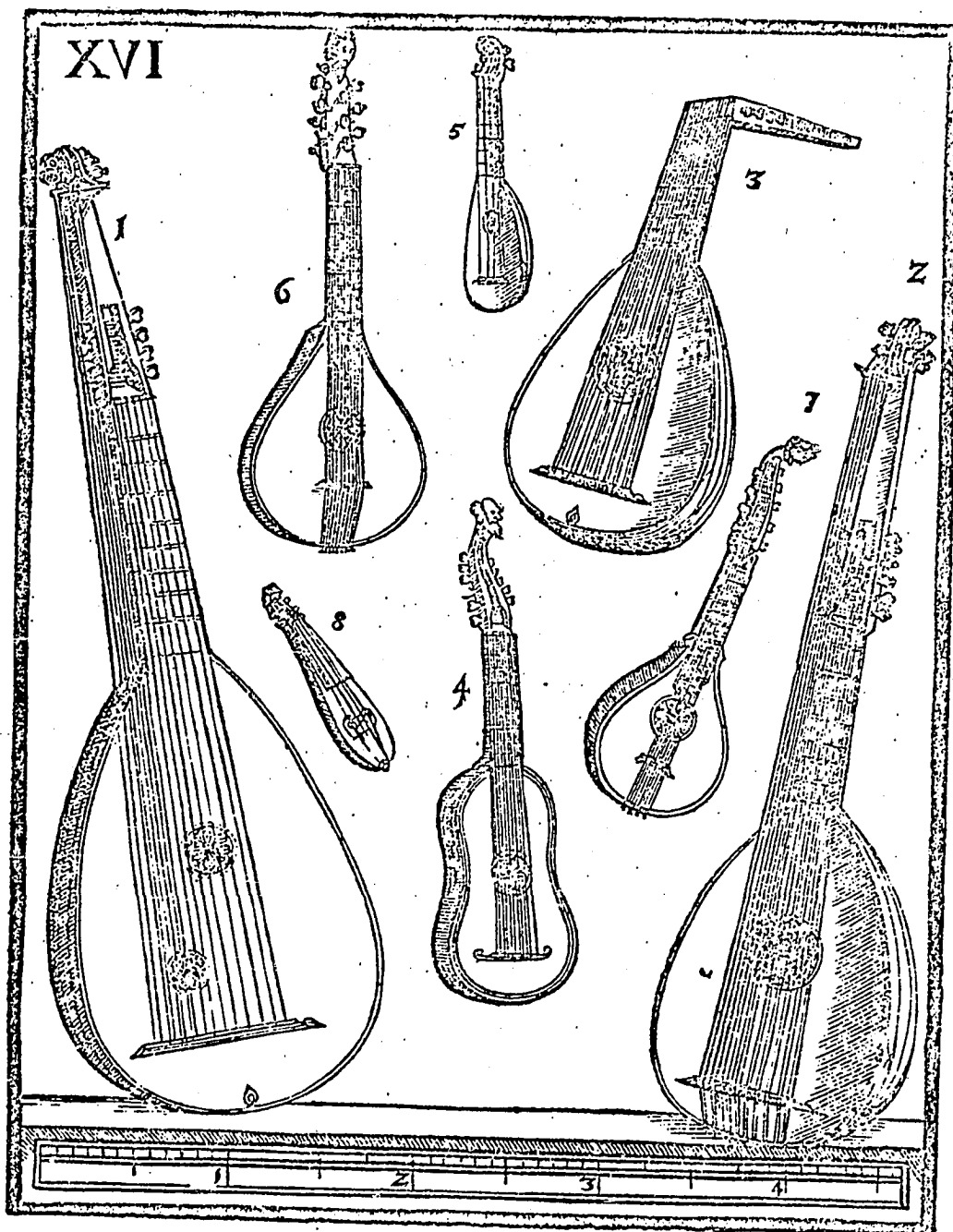
The terms Quint and Quart in the last sentence are explained in a table on the same page the quotation is taken from. In German usage, Quint is the highest string, Quart the next highest. Blumenfeld, in his English translation, incorrectly renders the passage "and the low fourth and fifth strings must be tuned an octave lower"(p. 50).

²¹ For example; P. P. Melli (da Reggio): Intavolatura di liuto attiorbato. Venice, 1614.

Example X:5. Plate V from Praetorius' De organographia, showing a chitarrone (left), an oversize double bass, and some other instruments.

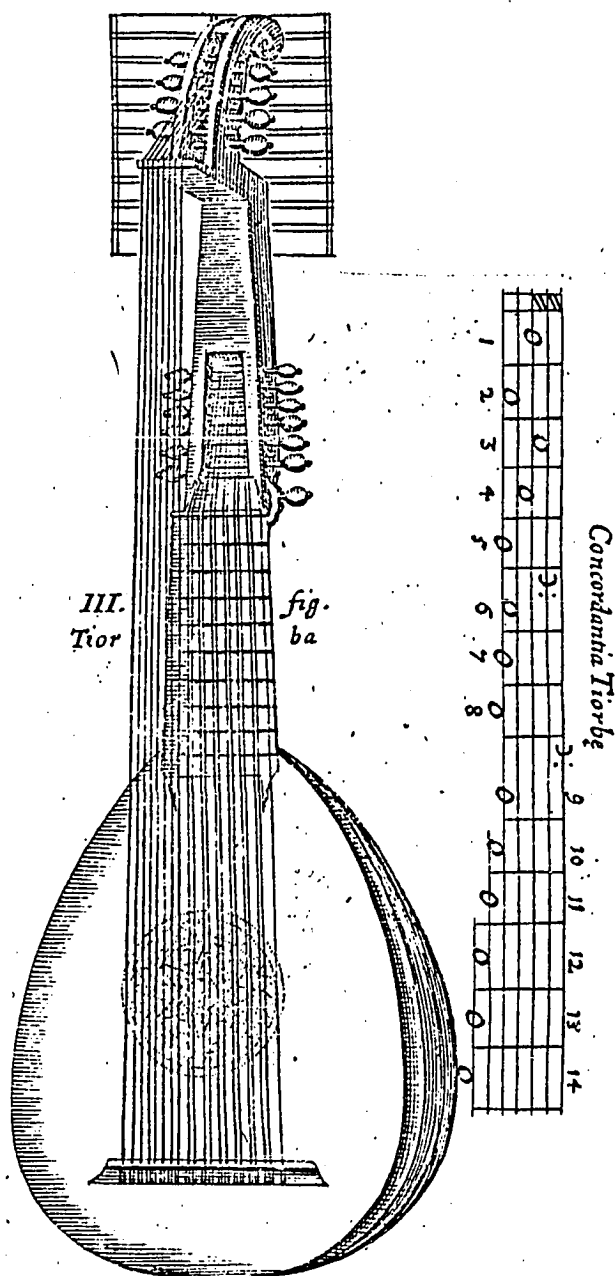


Example X:6. Plate XVI from Praetorius' De organographia. On the left is a single string Paduan theorbo; on the right a theorbized lute.



1. Paduanische Theorba. 2. Laute mit Abjügem oder Tescudo Theorbara. 3. Chor Laute.
4. Quinterna. 5. Mandorlaen. 6. Sechs Thörliche Chor Zitter. 7. Klein
Englisch Zitterlein. 8. Klein Beig. Pofche genant.

Example X:7. The theorbo, according to Kircher. The drawing shows 15 courses with a corresponding number of pegs, but the tuning chart shows only 14. There are single courses in the bass, double courses over the fingerboard with the exception of the single chanterelle.



replaced the older type. Piccinini (1623) still uses the word lute but gives the instrument 13 courses, only one less than the archlute.²² V. Giustiniani, sometime around 1628, observes that the lute has been "almost entirely abandoned since the Theorbo has been introduced."²³ What he appears to mean is that the 16th century lute has been abandoned in favour of an instrument with a large number of bass courses. This interpretation is supported by an illuminating statement by Maugars, concerning the difference between the theorbo and the archlute.

. . . the only difference between the archlute and the theorbo is that [on the latter] one tunes the second string and the chanterelle higher. The theorbo is used for singing, and the archlute for playing with the organ, with a thousand beautiful variations, and an incredible dexterity.²⁴

If the archlute and the theorbo had different functions, the tuning alone, as Maugars says, hardly was the only distinguishing feature. The higher tuning of the upper courses of the theorbo suggests that it was the smaller of the two, and this impression is strengthened by a description of its use in a chamber performance.²⁵ It therefore seems that the instrument

²² A. Piccinini: Intavolatura di liuto et di chitarrone, p. 10.

²³ V. Giustiniani: Discorso sopra la musica (ca. 1628), In A. Solerti, L'origine del melodramma, Torino, Bocca, 1903, p. 125: "Era anche per il passato molto in uso il suonare di Liuto; ma questo stromento resta quasi abbandonato affatto, doppoichè s'introdusse l'uso della Tiorba."

²⁴ E. Thoinan: Maugars . . . , p. 32. ". . . n'y ayant autre difference de l'Archiluth d'avec la Thuorbe, sinon qu'ils font monter la seconde et la chanterelle en haut, se servant de la Thuorbe pour chanter, et de l'Archiluth pour toucher avec l'Orgue, avec mille belles varietez, et une vistesse de main incroyable."

²⁵ Thoinan, Maugars . . . , p. 37.

referred to by Maugars, and by Giustiniani as well, as "theorbo", is the same as Praetorius called a theorbized lute.²⁶

Whereas the theorbo was used in intimate surroundings, the archlute was the instrument for the church and the opera orchestra. As such it needed to be large and to have a powerful sound. Praetorius' Roman chitarrone would seem to have been ideally suited for such purposes, and this was probably the kind of instrument Maugars saw during his visit to Rome.

Size alone, however, might not have been enough to produce the penetrating sound needed for large halls, and modifications in the manner of plucking would seem to be a natural aid. Piccinini implies that some people, when playing the archlute, plucked with the nail on the thumb, but recommends against it. A century later, the German archlute player Sylvius Weiss mentions that the archlute is plucked with the nails,

²⁶ It is of some interest to note that the 18th century German archlute player, Sylvius Weiss, used the various kinds of lute-like instruments in much the same way as described by Maugars. In the opera orchestra, or in church, he preferred the more powerful archlute. For use in the chamber, specifically, for the accompaniment of solo cantatas (together with harpsichord), he preferred an instrument with 13 courses, 11 double and two single, which must have been much like the Italian theorbo.

(Weiss does not talk specifically about the difference between the theorbo and the archlute, but the emphasis on double courses on the lute may indicate that both the others used single courses. If so, the distinction made by Praetorius regarding the lute and the theorbo may still have been valid in Germany.)

Weiss's opinions on these matters are contained in a letter to J. Mattheson, published by the latter in Ephorus Wegen der Kirchenmusik, Hamburg, 1727, and quoted by Hans Neeman in "Die Lautenistenfamilie Weiss", Archiv für Musikforschung, vol. 4 (1919), p. 164.

whereas the lute is not.²⁷ This statement, in spite of its non-Italian origin, may warrant consideration. One of Weiss's most important duties was to play in the orchestra of the highly Italianized opera house in Dresden. Even allowing for some local variations, the instrumental playing probably was representative of Italian ideals.

There is one more complicating factor in 17th-century terminology. As the lute proper goes out of use early in the century, the word leuto continues to be found for a long time, and is common as late as in Scarlatti operas. Mrs. Wessely-Kropik indicates that in Roman payment records up to 1675, the term leuto is used more frequently than arci-liuto; thereafter the reverse is the case.²⁸ Since the lute proper clearly had gone out of use, the term leuto in this context apparently is to be understood as an abbreviation of the more cumbersome arciliuto.

With all the changes in terminology that took place, it will be useful briefly to summarize the highlights of the preceding discussion. In the period 1600 to 1620, the archlute at first appears with 13, later with 14 and occasionally with 16 courses. Banchieri, one of the first theorists to give information on the subject, indicates that the very top course may be tuned down one octave; Praetorius and Piccinini both indicate that the two highest courses always are tuned down an octave and

²⁷ See H. Neeman, "Die Lautenistenfamilie Weiss", p. 164.

²⁸ H. Wessely-Kropik: Lelio Colista, p. 62.

the other alternative apparently was only a transitional form, No clear distinction is made between the terms tiorba, arciliuto, and chitarrone, although the latter tends to be associated with a very long-necked instrument and the first with one of a more modest size. Throughout this period the lute is being influenced by the theorbo by the addition of bass strings.

By 1640 the terms arciliuto and chitarrone have come to designate a large instrument, probably with single courses and with the two upper tuned one octave down. The same instrument is also referred to as leuto or liuto, a usage that leaves little room for misinterpretation since the Renaissance lute had gone out of use. The theorbized lute and the theorbo proper both go under the name of theorbo, and are from small to medium size. This kind of theorbo most likely had double courses over the fingerboard although some instruments employed single courses. In the first case the upper two strings would be at pitch; in the second, one octave down. Towards the middle of the 17th century it is possible that the tuning of the theorbo was moved one step up, making the highest string a'. Whether the archlute also changed is uncertain, but the similarity between the archlute and the theorbo would seem to indicate that both instruments probably were affected.

Archlute Accompaniment

Giustiniani, when observing that the lute had gone out of use, explains why the theorbo had gained so greatly in popularity:

[The theorbo], being more suitable for singing even moderately well and with a poor voice, has been eagerly accepted generally in order to avoid the great amount of labor needed to learn to play the lute well.²⁹

Thus a "great amount of labour" is needed in order to learn to play the lute, but apparently not so with the theorbo. This is peculiar, since on both instruments the stopped strings are tuned the same way so there can be little difference in the basic left hand technique. A possible explanation is that the difference lies in the right hand technique. Piccinini, in the introduction to his Intavolatura, gives a partial clue to the problem at hand by pointing out that the lute and the archlute are not played the same way. His directions are concerned with the performance of the pieces that follow, rather than with accompaniment, but nevertheless seem to reflect a basic difference in the use of the two instruments. Whereas on the lute, all the notes of a chord are plucked simultaneously, on the archlute they are arpeggiated. Piccinini gives a number of examples in tablature with chords of three, four, five or six notes (Example X-8). In the resolutions the numbers are distributed throughout the measure, and it appears that he wants the notes of the arpeggio to fill up all the available time so that a chordal piece is performed with continuous motion all through. The strings are plucked one at the time, with the lowest note first, and most often with the rest in ascending order. The six-note patterns are divided into two groups of three with a change of

²⁹V. Giustiniani: Discorso sopra la musica, English translation by C. MacClintock in Musicological Studies and Documents, Rome, American Institute of Musicology, 1962, p. 79.

Example X:8. A. Piccinini: Examples of arpeggiation on the archlute.

Pizzicate di tre corde Pizzicate di quattro corde E di cinque E di sei

				7	0	X
0	4	0	0	0	2	0
		0	0	0	2	2
	3	3	3	3	2	3
2		3	2	3	0	2
0	0	2	0	2	0	0

				7	0	X
0	4	0	0	0	2	0
		0	0	0	2	2
	3	3	3	3	2	3
2		3	2	3	0	2
0	0	2	0	2	0	0

Transcription:

Example X:9 A. Piccinini: Examples of arpeggiation on the archlute.

a

				4
0	2	0		
3				
2	3	0		

0	2	0			
3	3				
2	3	0	0	2	2

Transcription

b

				2
0	2	2	0	
3	3	0	2	
2	2	3	0	

0	2	2	0		
3	3	0	2		
2	2	3	0	2	

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Example X:10. G. Dall'Abaco: Sonata a solo per il violoncello.
Fourth movement: "Arpeggiate a modo d'Arciluto"

The first system of musical notation consists of two staves. The upper staff is in bass clef, and the lower staff is in treble clef. Both staves are in the key of D major (two sharps) and 2/4 time. The upper staff features a continuous eighth-note arpeggiated pattern. The lower staff contains a melodic line with a half-note rest in the first measure, followed by a half-note, a quarter note, and a half note.

The second system of musical notation consists of two staves. The upper staff is in bass clef, and the lower staff is in treble clef. Both staves are in the key of D major (two sharps) and 2/4 time. The upper staff continues the eighth-note arpeggiated pattern. The lower staff features a melodic line with a half-note, a quarter note, and a half note, followed by a half-note rest in the first measure, and then a half note, a quarter note, and a half note.

The third system of musical notation consists of two staves. The upper staff is in bass clef, and the lower staff is in treble clef. Both staves are in the key of D major (two sharps) and 2/4 time. The upper staff continues the eighth-note arpeggiated pattern. The lower staff features a melodic line with a half-note, a quarter note, and a half note, followed by a half-note rest in the first measure, and then a half note, a quarter note, and a half note.

prigioner fortunato.³¹ One of the existing scores of Il prigioner fortunato is unusually detailed in its indications of instrumentation³² and shows that the archlute was used in a large number of sicilianos. When the archlute is specified in other operas from this time, by Scarlatti and by others, it is also commonly found in sicilianos.³³ Now there exists one instrumental siciliano, to be sure from another country, in which the harpsichord accompaniment is written out: J. S. Bach's flute sonata in E-flat major, reproduced in Example X-11. The arpeggiated motion is reminiscent of that used by Dall'Abaco. The first note of each group usually is of a lower pitch than the rest. Bach, consistent with his own vocabulary, uses more non-harmonic notes, but generally speaking, his figuration could be described as a triple time adaption of the pattern in Dall'Abaco's cello sonata (Example X-10). The similarity is too great to be coincidence, particularly since this type of figuration is not characteristic for Bach's style. It would seem well within the realm of possibilities that Bach here was imitating a well-known idiom. He chose to write it out because his version deviates from the set pattern, and as often is the case, he was not content with leaving matters of such

³¹ E. J. Dent's A. Scarlatti. London, Arnold, 1905, new impression with additional notes by F. Walker, London, Arnold, 1960, p. 65.

³² London, British Museum, MS Add. 16126, dated "anno 1699".

³³ The Naples MS of Il prigioner fortunato (Naples, San Pietro a Maiella, MS 31.3.32) contains much less detailed markings than that in London. In places where the British Museum copy specifies violoncello e leuto the Naples MS has only violoncello. When the latter indication is found in other MSS. which occasionally happens, it may therefore refer to the use of both archlute and cello.

Example X:11. J. S. Bach: Siciliano, from the sonata for flute and harpsichord in E-flat major, BWV 1031.

Siciliano.

The image displays a musical score for J.S. Bach's 'Siciliano' from the Sonata for Flute and Harpsichord in E-flat major, BWV 1031. The score is arranged in four systems, each containing three staves: a single treble clef staff for the flute and a grand staff (treble and bass clefs) for the harpsichord. The tempo is marked 'Siciliano.' The key signature is one flat (E-flat major). The first system shows the beginning of the piece with a simple melody in the flute and a rhythmic accompaniment in the harpsichord. The second system features a more complex melodic line in the flute with some grace notes and a more active harpsichord accompaniment. The third system continues the melodic development in the flute with some slurs and a steady harpsichord accompaniment. The fourth system concludes the piece with a final melodic flourish in the flute and a concluding accompaniment in the harpsichord.

importance to the taste of the performer.

If this line of reasoning is correct, then Bach's "Siciliano", even if somewhat elaborate, may reflect a typical style of accompaniment in similar pieces in the early part of the century.³⁴ Such performance would considerably alter the character of the siciliano from what usually is heard in the 20th century. The basic rhythm in the bass consists of a quarter note followed by a eighth (Example X-12a); frequently the quarter note is divided into one dotted eighth and a sixteenth note. (Example X-12b). In either case, the basso continuo realization generally follows the simpler pattern and thus consist of four chords to a measure. In

Example X-12. Common rhythmic patterns in sicilianos



order to keep the music flowing, it is necessary to choose a tempo in which this pattern is sufficiently alive rhythmically to provide a slow, lilting feeling. With the sixteenth note motion used by Bach, the element

³⁴The broken chord accompaniment is not, however, applicable to German practices around the middle of the 18th century, as evidenced in the following statement by C. P. E. Bach:

"In the siciliana, be it fast or slow, quarter notes and longer are played and held by both hands. The single eighths which follow the quarters are also accompanied by the right hand. In all other cases, regardless of the construction of the bass, the right hand plays only once for each group of three eighth notes or the equivalent." (Essay on the True Art of Playing Keyboard Instruments, English translation by W. J. Mitchell, New York, Norton, 1949, p. 414f.

of continuity is already there; rather than a lilt, there is a sense of smooth flow. The tempo therefore should be taken considerably slower than customary, so slow that the occasional sixteenth-notes in the solo part have enough time to receive some measure of expressive emphasis. The result is emphasis on melodic rather than on rhythmic qualities, something that would seem most appropriate in a slow operatic aria of the early 18th century.

The siciliano is by far the most prominent and most easily recognized type of aria associated with the archlute. There are also, but without any consistency of application, a large number of "running bass" arias in which the chordal instrument is archlute.³⁵ No common factor in the texts reveals the reason for the choice of instrument. The preference for the archlute would therefore seem to rest on purely musical grounds: namely, that the nature of the bass movement suggests a commonly known and attractive sounding archlute accompanimental style.

With a fast moving bass, many of the basso continuo manuals recommend a change of harmony for every two, three, or even four notes in the bass. Capitalizing on this advice in constructing an accompaniment

³⁵ The only aria in Gabrielli's Flavio Cuniberto to use the archlute has a running bass; the same is true in Scarlatti's La Rosaura, Publicationen alterer Praktischer und Theoretischer Musikwerke, Jhg. 14, vol. 14, part 2. There are two arias of this kind in an oratorio by Fregiotti, Naples, Oratorio dei Gerolamini, MS 436, and one in a cantata by Perti, Bologna, San Petronio MS P. LXV no. 15. Many more examples are found scattered in other works from the time.

suitable for the archlute one may arrive at the figuration suggested in Example X-13, which conforms to the spirit of Piccinini's recommendation in not using more than one note at a time. Moreover, the repeated notes are idiomatic to the instrument, and thus performance in a fast tempo is relatively easy. There may be times when one note of a chord is left out, yet the total impression is one of complete harmony. Example X-14 shows an attempt to apply this type of figuration to an aria from Scarlatti's La Rosaura. In the first measure there are figures with each bass-note that cause some irregularities, but very soon the bass lends itself to a more patterned realization. The result seems suitable for the instrument and for the music, yet it must be emphasized that the realization is entirely hypothetical.

It is difficult enough to deal with archlute accompaniments in pieces in which the archlute is known to have been the chordal instrument, yet more difficult to deal with them in a repertory in which instruments are mentioned so rarely as is the case with operas written between 1640 and 1680. Only one known aria from this period specifically calls for archlute: Amor senza poter l'amato be goder - - "Love that cannot be shared" - - from G. A. Boretti's Eliogabalo³⁶ first performed in Venice in 1668. The aria (Example X-15) has a rather languid text, not dissimilar

³⁶ B. A. Boretti: Eliogabalo, complete score in Venice, Biblioteca Nazionale di San Marco, MS It. IV 413, 9937; incomplete score in Naples, San Pietro a Maiella, MS 33.5.26. The aria with archlute is marked in both scores, and occurs in Act I, scene 11.

Example X:13

a. Original bass motion.

b. Suggested realization on the archlute.



c. A more extended example.



Example X:14. A. Scarlatti: Aria from La Rosaura, act II, scene 3,
with suggested realization for the archlute.

Aria. Violino solo con leuto e Violoncino, senza Cimbalo.

The first system of the musical score consists of three staves. The top staff is the original melody in G major, C major, 7/8 time. The middle staff shows the original bass line with figured bass notation (6, #, 6, 6, #) and a suggested realization for the archlute. The bottom staff is a more detailed realization of the bass line, showing the specific fingerings and articulation for the archlute. The word "Realization" is written below the middle staff.

The second system of the musical score consists of three staves. The top staff is the original melody in G major, C major, 7/8 time. The middle staff shows the original bass line with figured bass notation (6, #, 6#, 6, 6, 6, 6, 6) and a suggested realization for the archlute. The bottom staff is a more detailed realization of the bass line, showing the specific fingerings and articulation for the archlute.

Example X:15. Nisbe's aria from Eliogabalo by G. A. Boretti.

Aria con la tiorba.

The musical score is presented in three systems, each with a vocal line (treble clef) and a lute accompaniment line (bass clef). The time signature is 3/4. The lyrics are written below the vocal line.

System 1:
 A-mor senza po-ter l'amato ben goder ne ha

System 2:
 verlo appre- so e' una pena d'in-ferno in-

System 3:
 ferno i-stes- so e'una pena d'in-ferno

Below the third system, there are the numbers 4 and 3, likely indicating fingerings for the lute accompaniment.

to those often found in sicilianos. The bass is slow moving, and lends itself to the use of arpeggiated patterns. Whether this case is an exception to, or representative of the practice at the time is futile to speculate. The appropriateness of using it as a model can only be established by trial and error, if and when competent performers on the archlute are available.

The Archlute as a Bass-Line Instrument

During the first third of the 17th century the archlute is frequently mentioned as a basso continuo instrument. In this period one finds a number of publications with archlute tablature, consisting of simple chordal accompaniments,³⁷ and these are probably indicative of the kind of realizations that were used. The archlute continues to be mentioned for accompaniments throughout the century, but with decreasing frequency.

Maugars observed that there is a difference in function between the theorbo and the archlute in that the latter always played together with the organ, whereas the former apparently was used alone for realizations. Considering the nature of each instrument, the difference in usage makes good sense. A small size theorbo, i. e., a theorbized lute, is reasonably well adapted for playing complete realizations. The same cannot be said of the archlute, or even of a large theorbo. The wide fretting makes it difficult, sometimes impossible, to stop all the necessary strings in a

³⁷ For example G. G. Kapsberger: Villanelle . . . con Intavolatura di Chitarrone. Four books were published in Rome between 1610 and 1623.

chord at the same time. The most convenient manner of playing consists in plucking one string at a time and that leaves essentially two alternatives in usage: to play broken chord accompaniments, or to function as a single-line instrument. Indications are that the latter by far was the most important.

The archlute, were it to be used on a single line of music, would naturally take the bass line. Praetorius was aware of this usage and mentions that the archlute "is used together with bass instruments or in their stead."³⁸ It appears that Praetorius regarded the archlute only as a substitute when used on the bass line. This attitude is not found in Italy. On the contrary, there is substantial evidence that from an early time, the archlute was one of the most important bass instruments. In the sonatas by S. Bernardi, published in 1621, the bass is to be played by "a chitarrone, trombone, or bassoon."³⁹ The instrument mentioned initially is presumably first choice. Since a separate basso continuo part is furnished, there is no implication that the archlute should play a realization. Moreover, both the nature of the part and the instruments suggested as substitutes indicate that the bass should be performed as it

³⁸ M. Praetorius: De organographia, p. 52: " Die Theorba ist auch gar lieblich anzuhören wenn sie... nebenst dem Bass oder anstatt des Basses gebraucht wird."

³⁹ Stefano Bernardi: Madrigaletti a due e a tre voci, con alcune Sonate a Tre per due Violini overo, Cornetti, & un Chitarrone, Trombone, overo Fagotto, con il basso continuo. Venice, Vincenti, 1621.

stands without further additions. The archlute is the most frequently mentioned bass instrument in the secular pieces in B. Marini's Opus VIII. Since there is a separate basso continuo part it is unlikely that the regular bass instrument would play a realization. This has to be so in those pieces, such as Sinfonia No. 2, where the bass is played by a trombone, or by some other single-line instrument. It would also seem to be true of Sinfonia No. 3 which in the figured bass part is referred to as being for doi Canti e Basso -- "two trebles and bass". In the canto secondo part, Sinfonia No. 3 is referred to as being for doi Violini, e Chitarone, o altro Basso -- "two violins, and archlute, and another bass", but that does not imply any alteration in the performance of the bass part. Since the archlute can only be replaced by another bass instrument one must conclude that it functioned as such itself and therefore did not play a realization. If so, the same should apply to the other secular pieces in the same collection when the archlute is called on to play the bass part. The Balletti in Marini's Opus VIII calls for "Doi violini, e chitarrone, o altro Istromento simile." Normally one might consider "another instrument similar" to the archlute to be one capable of playing chords, but in this context a better choice is one capable of playing the bass line as it stands. ⁴⁰

⁴⁰ The case has immediate application, f. ex. in certain works by S. Rossi. His second, third and fourth books of instrumental music are for "two violins, archlute, or another similar instrument." As pointed out in the chapter on "Secular Instrumental Music", these pieces are direct descendents from 16th-century three-part vocal works. The latter did not require a realization of the bass, and this may apply to Rossi's pieces as well. One hard nut left to crack, however, is that in Rossi's first book, he calls for "archlute or another istromento da corpo." This is normally interpreted as meaning "an instrument capable of furnishing

Archlute, celio and bassoon are mentioned as possible bass instruments around the middle of the century, in publications by G. B. Fontana and F. Cavalli.⁴¹ Later on the bassoon is mentioned in opera scores but hardly ever in published parts. Two bass instruments in particular seem to dominate during the second half of the 17th century: the violone and the archlute. In church sonatas, they are constantly mentioned as interchangeable. Particularly after the appearance of Corelli's first works, around 1680, both instruments are more commonly mentioned together than separately, a practice which persists into the 1700's.

The prominent mention in publications of the use of the archlute on the regular bass part is supported by payment records indicating available instrumentalists. It has been documented that Roman churches up to about 1660 normally used an ensemble consisting of two violins and one archlute.⁴² Evidently, the archlute was used as a bass instrument, in which case the group would suffice for the performance of the

a body of sound," in other words, of furnishing a realization. It is possible to argue that the expression, rather than referring to sound, relates to shape: an instrument with a body, or maybe better, with a belly, such as bass viols, cellos, lutes, or even other plucked instruments. Excluded would be the bassoon and the trombone as well as such chordal instruments as organ, harpsichord, etc. Both interpretations seem possible and neither, unfortunately, is conclusive.

⁴¹G. B. Fontana: Sonate a 1, 2, 3, per il violino, o cornetto, fagotto, chitarrone, violoncino o simile altro istromento. Venice, Magni, 1641.

Francesco Cavalli: Musiche Sacre. Venice, Vincenti, 1656. The work includes a part for cello, which, according to a note from the printer, may be played by an archlute, a bassoon, or another similar instrument. See above, Chapter I.

⁴²H. Wessely-Kropik, Lelio Colista, p. 33.

the majority of instrumental sonatas and sacred vocal works with instruments being written at this time.

The archlute seems to have been used extensively as a bass instrument in the performance of oratorios in Rome around the middle of the 17th century. There are both printed and MS scores that call for the use of a liuto, and this is to some extent verified in payment records.⁴³ Such usage apparently spread, for in Bologna there is an anonymous oratorio from the 1660's in which the essential basso continuo instruments are harpsichord and archlute.⁴⁴ The practice was, however, not long-lived. By 1675 it is clear that the oratorio, probably through the influence from opera, had adopted the cello as the most prominent instrument for doubling the bass line.

The Archlute as an Ornamenting Instrument

The most successful use of the archlute may have been in conjunction with the organ. In the church sonata, the effect would have been most satisfying in that the plucked sound projects the contrapuntally important bass very well against the backdrop of an organ continuo. In such

⁴³ See for example the two oratorios in Bologna, *Civico Museo Bibliografia Musicale*, MS Q.45; also M. Marazzoli, La Vita humana, Roma, Mascardi, 1658. The payment records from San Marcello published by Liess ("Materialen" . . . p. 143ff.) indicate that in the early 1660's, oratorios still were performed with an ensemble consisting only of two violins and archlute, in addition to the customary harpsichords and organs.

⁴⁴ La Sepultura di Christo, thought to be by the cellist Franceschini. The parts are preserved in the archives at San Petronio in Bologna, Busta P.54.1.

pieces the archlute may even be preferable to a violone, since the sustained sound of the latter tends to blend with the organ and consequently renders the bass less distinct. The effect of the archlute is less convincing in cases where the bass is more static, as for instance in most of the oratorios from the middle of the 17th century, and there are indications that the instrument played a much more active role than the scores would suggest. Maugars has already been quoted as pointing out that the archlute, when used with the organ, was played "with a thousand beautiful variations, and an incredible manual dexterity." The same superlative language is used to describe the role of the archlutes in an oratorio performance at San Marcello.⁴⁵ The apparent discrepancy between the notated part and the actual performance is explained by Doni in a comment on the difficulties of intonation in ensemble playing:

. . . this is the reason why those who play the [arch -] lute or the theorbo together with organs and harpsichords always employ diminutions, because if they should use full chords, the discord would be recognized, whereas in a fast tempo, dissonance gives no trouble as it is not discernible.⁴⁶

The discords result from the discrepancy between the meantone temperament used on keyboard instruments and the pure intervals used in tuning the lute, and are particularly noticeable when both instruments play full

⁴⁵E. Thoinan: Maugars, p. 30.

⁴⁶G. B. Doni: Trattato della musica scenica, p. 111: ". . . e di qui nasce che quelli che suonano il Liuto, o Tiorba con gli Organi, o Clavicembali, sempre diminuiscono, perche se usassero botte piene, vi si conoscerebbe la dissonanza, la quale in note veloci non da fastidio, perche non si discerne."

chords. The archlute therefore plays diminutions when together with the organ or the harpsichord. Whether the tuning problem, as Doni suggests, was the origin of this practice may or may not be the case. A different perspective on this question is found in one of the early basso continuo treatises, A. Agazzari's Del sonare sopra il basso.

Agazzari divides instruments into two classes, which he refers to respectively as fundamental and ornamenting. The first class consists of those capable of making a basso continuo realization, the second consists essentially of single line instruments, with the understanding that some, like the lute, may function in both capacities. A variety of plucked instruments are mentioned as appropriate for ornamenting, but included also are the lira, the violin and the violone. Agazzari says this about their use:

These instruments, which are combined with the voices in various ways, are in my opinion, so combined for no other purpose than to ornament and beautify, and indeed to season the consort. For this reason, these instruments should be used in a different way than those of the first class; while those maintained the tenor and a plain harmony, these must make the melody flourishing and graceful, each according to its quality, with a variety of beautiful counterpoints. But in this the one class differs from the other; while the instruments of the first class, playing the bass before them as it stands, require no great knowledge of counterpoint in the player, those of the second class do require it, for the player must compose new parts above the bass and new and varied passages and counterpoints.⁴⁷

⁴⁷ English translation in Strunk, Source Readings, p. 428. Original text in Kinkeldey, Orgel und Klavier . . ., p. 219.

"Li stromenti, che si meschiano con le voci variamente, non per altro, credo io, che per ornar, & abbellir, anzi con dire detto conserto si meschiano, & allora convien in altra maniera adoprarli dal primo: per cioche, come prima tenevano il tenore e l'armonia ferma, hora devono con varietà di bei contraponti, secondo la qualità dello stromento fiorire e render vaga la melodia. Ma in questo e differento l'uno dall'

The most puzzling part of the statement is that "the player must compose new parts above the bass," suggesting that new parts are improvised from a given bass. Such an idea is unique in the theoretical literature of the time, and there is reason to believe that Agazzari had something else in mind. There is another well-known practice which could have had a final result much like what is described by Agazzari. It is dealt with in a number of treatises, and is known under the name of "diminutions." The essence of diminution practice, as implied in the word, is to break up the line into more florid motion by using shorter note values. The primary difference between the application of diminutions and Agazzari's use of ornamenting instruments might seem to be that diminutions embellish any of the existing unadorned parts, whereas Agazzari's "new parts" were to be derived directly from the bass. Closer scrutiny reveals that this may be a misinterpretation. Agazzari, when talking about the fundamental instruments, specifically states that "they must play the bass before them as it stands" (underlining is added). In other words, he goes out of his way to point out which part they are playing from. When talking about the ornamenting instruments he says, in Strunk's translation, that they "must compose new parts above the bass". This does not necessarily mean that the playing was done from the bass part. The original Italian passage reads "deve sopra il medesimo basso compor nuovi parti." This might be interpreted as meaning "he must compose new parts in agreement altro; perche il primo havendo a suonar il basso postoli avanti, come sta; non ricerca, che l'huomo habbi gran scienza di contraponto: ma il secondo lo ricerca; poiche deve sopra il medesimo basso compor nuove parti sopra, e nuovi, e variati passaggi, e contraponti."

with the same bass," the sense being that the improvisation must relate to the bass according to the basic rules of counterpoint.

One of Agazzari's points is that the instruments "are combined with the voices in various ways", and in his opinion are "so combined for no other purpose than to ornament and beautify, and indeed to season the consort." This practice obviously pertains to music in which voices and instruments participate together, and not to instrumental music per se. Presumably what Agazzari has in mind is something like the pieces for four or more voices from the 1589 Florentine Intermedii, which often include enough instruments to double each part. In other words, it is a practice specifically associated with the polyphony of the Renaissance.

It is hardly necessary to point out that an ornamenting instrument in the treble register would be out of character in early 17th-century monodic music. The nature of the new style predicates that ornamenting instruments, if at all applicable, would have to be employed on the bass part, and there are indications that the practice was carried over in such a modified form. Important clues about the transition, especially regarding the choice of instrument, can be gleaned from Agazzari. Agazzari's favourite ornamenting instrument was the lute and he goes to considerable length describing the manner in which it plays:

. . . he who plays the lute . . . must use gentle strokes and repercussions, sometimes slow passages, sometimes rapid and repeated ones, sometimes something played on the bass strings, sometimes beautiful vyings and conceits, repeating and bringing out these figures at different pitches and in different places; he must, in short, so weave the voices

together with long gruppi, trilli, and accenti, each in its turn, that he gives grace to the consort and enjoyment and delight to the listeners,⁴⁸

The lute was in the process of being changed by the time Agazzari was writing, and clearly was not the instrument of the future. It would seem logical, however, that the ornamented playing of the lute continued with its offspring, the theorbized lute, and therefore also on the theorbo and possibly on the chitarrone as well. If this is correct, the statements by Doni and Maugars indicate that Renaissance diminution practices were continued in the Baroque through the ensemble-improvisations of the archlute.

The use of ornamenting instruments, as described by Agazzari, implies that there also must be a fundamental, or basso continuo instrument in the ensemble. The earliest examples of this kind are found in opera. The use of the archlute in conjunction with organ or harpsichord is mentioned in the preface to Cavalieri's Rappresentazione, and is found with considerable frequency in Monteverdi's Orfeo. Whereas the effect

⁴⁸ Strunk, Source Readings, p., 428. Original text in Agazzari, Del sonare . . . p. 8: "Onde chi suona leuto . . . devesi dunque, hora con botte, e ripercosse dolci; hor con passaggio largo, et hora stretto, e raddoppiate, poi con qualche sbordonata, con belle gare e perfidie, repetendo, a cavando le medesime fuge in diverse corde, e luoghi; in somma con lunghi gruppi, e trilli, et accenti a suo tempo, intrecciare le voci, che dia vaghezza al conserto, e gusto, e diletto all'uditori."

In the translation several terms have been restored to their Italian form, mostly because there is no good equivalent in English. According to Caccini, gruppo is the modern trill, and trillo consists of an often accelerating succession of repeated notes (Caccini, Nuove Musiche; see table in Strunk, Source Readings, p. 384). Accento, according to Praetorius, may be an appoggiatura, a passing note, and various other melodic embellishments (Syntagma Musicum, vol. III, p. 233; the large table showing the various alternatives is reproduced in F. T. Arnold, The Art of Accompaniment, p. 10.)

of ornamented playing on the archlute together with the organ basso continuo would be very attractive, the case is much less convincing when the chordal instrument is the harpsichord. In Orfeo there are a number of cases where the harpsichord and the archlute are joined by a cello; it is possible that when the latter instrument is left out, the archlute takes over its function in reinforcing the bass. The general descriptions of ornamented playing given by Agazzari and Maugars capture the flavour of the performance, but fall short of demonstrating the kinds of diminutions that might be appropriate. Certain cases in early operas might seem to provide a clue; one of these is Landi's San Alessio. In the opening sinfonia, and in some of the other instrumental pieces as well, there are two bass parts in the score. One is designated Basso Continuo per Gravicembali, the other lists a group of bass instruments: harps, (arch-?) lutes, theorbos and violoni (Example X-16). The two parts are essentially the same, except that the one for instruments at times contain somewhat faster motion. For example, a whole note may be broken up into four quarters on the same pitch. Whereas this might be considered a modest kind of figuration, it cannot be called ornamentation at all. Opera scores commonly give two bass lines, one for the orchestral bass instruments, and one for the continuo. The orchestral bass tends to follow the rhythm of the other orchestral instruments, and this is the real bass in the piece. The basso continuo is a simplified part in which the repeated notes have been drawn together into one sustained pitch. This procedure, to which Landi adheres, is widely used throughout the century in all kinds of

Example X:16. S. Landi: Sinfonia from Il S. Alessio.

SINFONIA PER INTRODUZIONE DEL PROLOGO

Arre Violini, Arpe, Lauti Granicembali, Tiorbe, Violoni & Lira.

Sifa prima di calar la Tenda.

Violino Primo. This staff shows the first violin part, featuring a series of sixteenth-note patterns across several measures.

Violino Primo.

Violino Secondo. This staff shows the second violin part, mirroring the first violin with similar sixteenth-note patterns.

Violino Secondo.

Violino Terzo. This staff shows the third violin part, continuing the sixteenth-note texture.

Violino Terzo.

Arpe, Lauti, Tiorbe, & Violoni. This staff shows the lute, harp, and theorbo accompaniment, featuring a steady sixteenth-note accompaniment with some accidentals (b, b3) and fingerings (6, 43, 6).

Arpe, Lauti, Tiorbe, & Violoni.

Basso Continuo per Granicembali. This staff shows the basso continuo part for the harpsichord, with a similar sixteenth-note accompaniment and fingerings (6, 6, 6, 6, 6, 6).

Basso Continuo per Granicembali.

instrumental music. The plucked instruments in Landi's work might still have played diminutions, of course, but probably of a considerably more elaborate kind than their part in the score suggests.

Two arias from the last half of the 17th century provide somewhat more tangible material about the type of ornamentation practiced on the archlute. One of them is from an anonymous oratorio probably written in Rome around the middle of the century; the other is found in Scarlatti's opera Le nozze col nemico.⁴⁹ (Examples X-17 and X-18). In the oratorio aria there are two separate instrumental lines, one for the archlute and the other for the basso continuo. Except for the ending, the archlute mainly participates when the voice rests, and when it plays, it is in most places clearly applying diminutions to the bass line. The aria is unusual in being perhaps the earliest known case of a written-out part for an obbligato instrument. It is difficult to account for this unprecedented feature, apart from the assumption that it represents, in notation, a type of ornamentation normally improvised on the archlute.

The Scarlatti aria is relevant, not because the archlute is specified, but because of the title Aria di gusto Leuto -- "aria in the lute style". The element that links the aria to the lute is the bass ornamentation. The original version has only the embellished instrumental line. In the example, the harmonically active notes have been extracted and added on a third

⁴⁹The oratorio is found in a volume containing music by F. Foggia, M. Marazzoli, Luigi (Rossi) and others, Bologna, Civico Museo Bibliografia Musicale, MS Q/45, fol. 178v. The Scarlatti piece is contained in a volume of arias from Le nozze col nemico, Naples, San Pietro a Maiella, MS 33.3.17, fol. 87.

Example X:17. Aria from an anonymous oratorio, in (Ca 1660).

Alto solo con Tiorba.

The musical score is presented in three systems. The first system shows the vocal line and the Tiorba accompaniment. The second system shows the vocal line with lyrics and the Organo accompaniment. The third system shows the Organo accompaniment with figured bass notation.

System 1: The vocal line begins with a whole rest, followed by a half note G4, a quarter note A4, and a quarter note B4. The lyrics "O qualis" are written below the notes. The Tiorba part consists of a continuous eighth-note accompaniment.

System 2: The vocal line continues with the lyrics "hodie in celesti sede refulgeo beatissima Virgo M(a-ria)". The Organo part provides a harmonic accompaniment with chords and moving lines.

System 3: The Organo part continues with figured bass notation: 43, 3, 2, 0. The system concludes with a double bar line and a repeat sign.

Example X:17
(cont.)

In most of the aria the voice and the archlute participate at different times, but in certain sections, such as the ending, they are both active.

The musical score consists of three systems, each with three staves. The top staff is for the voice, the middle for the archlute, and the bottom for the basso continuo. The key signature is one sharp (F#) and the time signature is common time (C). The lyrics are: "Al- le- luia Al- lelui- a Al- lelulia". The score shows the voice and archlute playing together in the first system, then the archlute playing alone in the second system, and finally both playing together in the third system. The piece ends with a double bar line and repeat signs in the final measure of the third system.

Example X:18. A. Scarlatti: Aria from Le nozze col nemico.

Aria di gusto leuto.

Adagio

Eco Eco mensogniera

Extracted bass:

eco eco mensogniera ah! quest'anima infe-

lice non ti crede e si dispe- ra.

staff. This added line is approximately what an experienced figured bass player would have extracted in his mind as the basis for the chordal realization. A decade or two earlier, the composer himself had written down the added line and the lutenist would have been expected to improvise something like the bass provided by Scarlatti. Our notation on three staves makes clear the way in which the aria was performed, and makes its similarity to the oratorio aria obvious.

As discussed in the chapter on secular vocal music, arias with elaborate bass lines are quite common in the 1690's. The Scarlatti example, however, has few parallels among the basso obbligato arias. The diminutions used are distinctive enough to be associated specifically with the archlute, and are rarely seen on paper because they normally were created extemporaneously in a performance.

If the two arias are representative of the figuration that once was improvised on the archlute, they indicate the existence of two fundamentally different ways of applying diminutions. The bass of the Scarlatti piece is essentially melodic, since the diminutions fill the intervals between the harmonically active notes to create a predominance of stepwise movement. The smoothness is further enhanced by the emphasis on even motion. The oratorio aria, in contrast, is more rhythmically oriented with such driving motives as the eight-note followed by two sixteenths. The figuration moves stepwise but often returns to its starting point so that the skip to the next harmonically active note remains unaltered. The

vigorous character is thereby emphasized.

If these conclusions regarding improvised archlute ornamentation are even approximately correct, then the music in which such playing was expected would sound very different from its notated form. This may partly explain why the bass line in mid seventeenth-century arias remained slow moving and with so little apparent intrinsic interest over such a long period. Moreover, it suggests that when the traditional obbligato aria finally emerged in the 1670's, it may simply have represented a desire to have other instruments play the kind of parts that the archlutenist had been improvising for decades. In this way, the improvisatory practices of one generation may have become the model for the composed music of the next.

The Archlute as Double Bass Instrument

The most important difference between the smaller 16th century lute and the archlute consists in the added bass strings on the latter. Piccinini calls them contrabassi -- double bass strings -- and gives them credit for being one of the two main reasons why people were abandoning the lute in favor of the archlute.⁵⁰ In spite of their importance, the open strings are not conspicuously used in Piccinini's solo pieces, and it would seem that their value must have been greater when the instrument was used in another capacity. This idea is supported by Agazzari in that he

⁵⁰ A. Piccinini. Intavolatura, p. 6.

mentions the bass strings as the outstanding feature when the theorbo is used as an ornamenting instrument:

The theorbo, then, with its full and sweet consonances, greatly supports the melody, lightly restriking and playing passaggi on the open strings (the outstanding feature of that instrument) with trilli and subdued accenti played with the lower (i. e., the right) hand. ⁵¹

Thus when the archlute was used as an ornamenting instrument "double bass sounds" must have been heard all the time.

Another case where the open strings profitably may have been used is in pieces which require a full sound. In fast figuration this would be impractical. In passages where the continuo only has one chord for each beat, and not figuration, plucking the double bass strings together with the regular bass strings would substantially enrich the sound and be a welcome addition in, for example, orchestral pieces. In oratorio performances in Rome during the 1660's the archlute was the principal bass instrument and under those circumstances the above procedure would seem to be especially appropriate. If the open strings were used in this manner, the archlute, in effect, functioned as a bass and a double bass instrument at the same time. When in the 1670's, larger orchestras

⁵¹ A. Agazzari: Del sonare sopra il basso, p. 8: La Tiorba poi, con le sue piene, e dolci consonanze, accresce molto la melodia, ripercotendo, e passeggiando leggiadramente i suoi bordoni, particolar eccellenza di quello stromento, con trilli, et accenti muti, fatti con la mano di sotto.

Strunk translates mano di sotto, literally "the lower hand" as "left hand." The left hand is physically higher than the right as the instrument always is held so that the neck angles upwards. Moreover, the open strings are played exclusively with the right hand since no stopping is required.

came to be used in oratorios, a double bass was almost always included.⁵² As pointed out elsewhere, it appears that the use of a double bass was a novelty in Rome at this time, and it was conceivably introduced because "double bass sounds", through the use of the archlute, had become part of the contemporary ideal of orchestral sonority.

Summary

The archlute was clearly a most important instrument during the Baroque period. Its versatility was not equaled by any other instrument at the time, and it showed a remarkable adaptability to new circumstances. No doubt its most important use was as a bass-line instrument, a role in which it perpetuated a Renaissance tradition by ornamenting its part. As orchestras grew in size, however, the archlute must have disappeared from them as an ornamenting bass instrument; diminutions on the archlute would scarcely have been audible through the fuller sound. It apparently came to be used more frequently for the chordal accompaniment of arias, and was at times given virtuoso obbligato parts. At all times, of course, it was available to be used as a regular basso continuo instrument, i. e., to make a realization. Under some circumstances, it apparently functioned as a double bass also.

The demand for greater brilliance and loudness in the music of the early 18th century left the relatively soft spoken archlute at a disadvantage. Its role as a bass-line instrument was taken over by the cello,

⁵²R. Casimiri, "Oratorii del Masini. . .", Note d'Archivio, v. 13 (1936), p. 162ff.

and for the basso continuo realization the harpsichord came to be preferred. The archlute therefore gradually faded out of the picture.

CHAPTER XI SUMMARY

The main purpose of the preceding investigation has been to determine to what extent bass-line doubling was practiced in 17th-century Italian music. Specifically, the issue has been whether the basso continuo was reinforced by a single-line instrument as a matter of course even if the latter was not furnished with a separate part. It was initially shown that, contrary to common belief, such doubling finds no support in theoretical literature from the time. The examination of the music from the period by and large confirms the impression given by the theorists, and it may be stated definitely that at no time during the 17th century did there exist a general practice of doubling the basso continuo. This does not mean that the basso continuo line always was played by a chordal instrument alone but that when the participation of a bass instrument, or voice, was required, a separate part was included in the performance material. The rationale for including such a part is usually found in the nature of the work at hand. If the bass-line is contrapuntally important, i. e., contains imitations or animated motion, it is counted among the principal parts and therefore, like the other principal parts, played by a single-line instrument, or sung, as the case may be. The basso continuo, then, is derived from the principal bass part, often by omitting the faster motion and retaining only the harmonically active notes. Such a basso continuo has much in common with the "derived basso continuo" found in early 17th-century choral music.

It is somewhat more independent than the latter in that there might be scattered instances where it has its own line, distinct from all the others, but that is the exception rather than the rule.

Generally speaking, the continuo line, particularly in works before 1670, tends to be slow moving and devoid of melodic interest. It is most properly regarded, not as a melodic line, but as a succession of discrete symbols (i. e., notes), indicating the proper chords to be played. There is, of course, no reason why such a line must be reinforced through the participation of a bass-line instrument.

The only musical genre in which the performance of the basso continuo deviates from the main-stream of 17th-century music is opera. In opera, and later in oratorios, the basso continuo is played by both a chordal and a bass-line instrument, a convention that can be traced back to the Renaissance Intermedii. This is almost never indicated in the score, but where the original performance material is preserved there is always a separate part for the bass-line instrument. The presence of a separate bass part is in accordance with the 17th-century practice of furnishing a part for each of the participating instruments, and is not indicative of any tacit understanding of bass-line doubling in general.

Towards the end of the 17th century, developments in the chamber sonata and in the secular cantata created a situation in which bass-line doubling (in the modern sense) would seem to be desirable. The new situation was created by similar but entirely unrelated stylistic developments and only affected these two categories. In the cantata the change

came as a result of influence from the opera aria. In opera arias from the 1670's there is a distinct tendency to give the bass-line more importance than earlier in the century, frequently to such an extent that the bass is turned into an obbligato full of melodically significant material. Such a melodic bass, particularly when slow moving, is not well projected by the harpsichord alone and the presence of a cello is really required. In opera, there would always have been a cello playing the same part as the harpsichord. This was not the case in the cantata, but when the new kind of aria finds its way into this genre it would be musically appropriate to include a cellist among the performers. This was unquestionably done at times, but it does not appear to have been anything like a rigid practice, and at least one composer, Gaffi, carefully points out that only a harpsichord is needed for the accompaniment of his cantatas.

In the chamber sonata the change came as a result of influence from the church sonata. The earlier dance-collections, the immediate ancestors of the chamber sonata, were, as a rule, performed with only one instrument on the bass: a single line instrument, or a chordal instrument, but rarely both. As the dances during the 1680's became increasingly stylized, the bass grew in contrapuntal importance, and by the 1690's a separate part for a bass-line instrument, in addition to the basso continuo, is often included. Even in the absence of a separate part it may be desirable to include a bass-line instrument. The bass in these works is often of approximately the same importance as in a normal church sonata a tre, in which the bass is one of the principal parts. Since the presence of a

bass-line instrument in the latter can be taken for granted it would seem reasonable that the same applies to chamber sonatas with an elaborate bass part.

It is of some significance that a case for bass-line doubling can be made in secular music but not in sacred music. The absence of a separate bass part in secular music can be explained by assuming that the bass-player read from the continuo part. With the harpsichord as continuo instrument this procedure would be perfectly feasible. The placement and the size of a church organ would often have made it very difficult, if not impossible, for both players to use the same part.

It has thus been shown that bass-line doubling was used, though inconsistently, at the beginning of the 18th century in the secular cantata. In the chamber sonata there is internal musical evidence for using a bass-line instrument, but there is no proof that this actually was done. Everything considered, it would be wrong to think of bass-line doubling as a general practice at this time, even in secular music. The most appropriate guideline for the performer is to employ a bass-line instrument only in works where the bass part contains melodic material or figuration that warrants being brought out beyond the capacity of the chordal instrument.

The bass-line instruments most frequently mentioned are archlute, violone, and cello. Since there are few players today of the archlute or the violone, the only practical alternative is the cello. The Italian tenor gamba (northern bass, tuned D - G - c - e - a - d'), often mistakenly called for by modern editors, was rarely used as a bass instrument in Italy and

should be considered only where none of the other three instruments is available.

Modern misconceptions regarding the use of bass-line instruments in Baroque music have led to incorrect editorial practices, in turn resulting in seriously distorted performances. Two commonly-held assumptions are responsible: first, that the basso continuo ideally should be reinforced regardless of what other instruments participate, and, secondly, that the bass-line instrument nevertheless is always optional. The most common editorial mistake is to include a bass-line instrument in a church sonata where the principal parts are trebles. Another is to include an extra bass part in sonatas in which one of the principal parts is a bass. Torelli's sonatas Opus I are sometimes taken as a precedent for such a practice, but the reason for the extra bass part in that case is that the collection was intended for orchestral performance. If, in a regular church sonata, a bass-line instrument already is included there is no reason to add another one.

The notion that the bass-line instrument is optional may be valid in some instances but certainly not in church sonatas where one of the principal parts is a bass. In such cases the bass has an important contrapuntal function and cannot be left out without distorting the texture.

Misconceptions concerning the use of bass-line instruments have also stood in the way of achieving a proper view of 17th-century instrumental music. Only when the function of bass-line instruments is correctly understood is it possible to show the difference between a church sonata a due

and one a tre. The same condition also is of importance in establishing how secular instrumental music came to be labelled a tre regardless of the contrapuntal nature of the parts. When this is understood, it becomes possible to distinguish between secular and sacred music in the early 17th century, a task that up till now has been regarded as problematical at best. The problem is particularly acute in works like Biagio Marini's Opus VIII (1626) which contains a confusing array of pieces with various titles. As in the works by S. Rossi, the secular pieces are all labelled a tre and are generally of homophonic nature so that only one, or two of the parts are of melodic or contrapuntal significance. The secular pieces, accordingly, are the sinfonie, the ritornelli, and the dances. The pieces in which the labelling always corresponds to the actual number of contrapuntally important parts (a due, a tre, etc.) are descendants of the canzona and belong to the branch that eventually develops into the church sonata. The category comprises the sonatas, the capriccios, and the canzonas. This method of distinguishing between sacred and secular instrumental music is not consistently applicable throughout the 17th century but is most useful during the first four or five decades. When the distinction has been made, however, it serves as a guideline for understanding later developments and therefore affects the view of instrumental music throughout the period in question.

In the course of this study facts have been uncovered which throw new light on the development of the instrumental concerto. A common view

of the ancestry of the concerto is that it developed from the church sonata and that the first step in this process simply was to double the parts. It has been possible to confirm this and to add one further observation: sonatas intended for orchestral performance contained an extra bass part, doubling the basso continuo, even if a cello already was included. The earliest published works of this kind are by Cazzati and appeared around 1660. Cazzati, however, does not seem to have had any immediate followers and only in the 1680's do other composers, such as Torelli and Bononcini, continue this line. With these composers the development apparently gained great momentum. The MS material at San Petronio in Bologna indicates that Torelli must have written true concertos in a style quite different from the church sonata as early as around 1690.

A more important ancestor of the orchestral concerto is the concerted sacred music from the second half of the 17th century. This repertory featured solo and ripieno singers and a small instrumental group consisting of two violins and a bass instrument. One thus finds several important ingredients of the orchestral concerto: the use of tutti and soli, and even an instrumental group comprising the same instruments as the concertino in the classical concerto grosso. Moreover, the free form in some early concertos, such as those by Corelli, may be seen as a result of the composer being influenced by formal procedures in vocal music. The degree of influence cannot be fully established until more is known about the concerted sacred music, but it would seem beyond doubt that some kind

of relationship must have existed. This might well be what Geminiani had in mind when he said that Corelli, his former teacher, "availed himself much of the compositions of other masters, particularly of the masses in which he played at Rome."¹

The modern misconception of bass-line doubling in 17th-century music has had many unfortunate effects. Not only has it lead to questionable performance practices, but it has also been an effective roadblock in the way of a proper understanding of various aspects of Italian 17th-century music in general and of instrumental music in particular. It is hoped that the material brought to light may result in a more extensive re-examination of these questions than has been possible within the framework of the present thesis.

¹Quoted by C. Burney in A General History of Music, London, 1776-1789, vol. III, p. 557.

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